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The magazine for Adobe® Photoshop® professionals

128

# 25

PRO TIPS FOR  
COMIC ART



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## DESIGN A POSTER

Top techniques for rebooting  
retro design classics today

EXPERT  
ADVICE

# DIGITAL PAINTING

## A COMPLETE GUIDE TO BRUSHES

CAPTURE LUMINOUS EYES



USE LAYERS FOR LIPS



## PLUS

- Tobias Hellström
- Lightfarm Studios
- Dell Precision M2800



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ISSUE 128

INDUSTRY SECRETS

### BRAND DESIGN

Master the art of brand identity  
with top tips and an expert tutorial

ARCHITECTURAL

### RETOUCHING

Transform your cityscape shots  
with these professional techniques



# PLUSH TOY VIGILANTES

## BROUGHT TO LIFE USING MODO



Matt Burniston uses MODO to model, animate and render his award-winning animated film, The Mega Plush.

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# ISSUE 128 WELCOME



Welcome to the latest issue of **Advanced Photoshop**. In this packed issue we've got the ultimate guide to portrait painting, listing every Photoshop brush you'll ever need.

**APRIL MADDEN**  
Editor

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

- DIGITAL PAINTING
- BRANDING
- PHOTOMANIPULATION
- ILLUSTRATION
- GRAPHIC DESIGN

#### COVER IMAGE

**SARA BIDDLE**  
[www.salizabeth.net](http://www.salizabeth.net)

Sara Biddle drew this character, named Saff Madd, for client Myriam Morand. She is a character in Morand's novel *Planète Axia*, part of the French language series *Les Mondes d'Amarande*.



Also this issue, discover the secrets of branding and how Photoshop can help you to create, maintain and enhance a brand identity (p34). You'll even learn how to craft one from scratch (p44).

Next up is a tutorial on architectural retouching from expert John Ross (p50). And we've got an exclusive poster from Autun Purser's *Fantastic Travel Destinations* range, crafted especially for us. You can learn how to re-create it on p60, and you'll find all of the assets on our FileSilo repository ready for you to use.

On p66, you'll learn how to use matte painting techniques to produce a stunning fantasy landscape, and on p72 discover 25 tips for comic artists from industry professionals. On p90 find out how to create and use wood textures in your art. Plus we've got interviews with Lightfarm Brazil, Brian Miller, Marcelo Garcia and Tobias Hellström. Enjoy!



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PHOTOSHOP.co.uk**



## 44 WORKSHOP: CREATE A BRAND IDENTITY

Learn how to develop and apply a brand identity for business cards, web and promotional items



## 66 WORKSHOP: FANTASY MATTE PAINTING

Titus Lunter shows how to create a scene on an epic scale with a sense of eerie grandeur



FOR BACK ISSUES, BOOKS  
AND MERCHANDISE VISIT:  
**imagineshop.co.uk**

## ■ ISSUE 128

# CONTENTS

### ■ EYE ON DESIGN

What's hot, who's in and the latest art & design happenings

- 06** | PRO PANEL  
Our contributors share Photoshop secrets
- 08** | INDUSTRY NEWS  
Fotolia finalises TEN Season 3
- 10** | PORTFOLIO INTERVIEW  
Retouch, retouch, retouch
- 16** | PROJECT FOCUS  
Climb every mountain
- 18** | STUDIO INTERVIEW  
Lightfarm Brazil



**18** | LIGHTFARM BRAZIL



**26** | DIGITAL PAINTING: COMPLETE  
GUIDE TO BRUSHES

**34** | SECRETS OF BRANDING





## TECHNIQUES

Professional artists reveal their high-end Photoshop skills in our easy-to-follow workshops

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>26</b> ■ CREATIVE FEATURE<br/>Digital painting</p> <p><b>34</b> ■ INDUSTRY FEATURE<br/>Secrets of branding</p> <p><b>44</b> ■ WORKSHOP<br/>Create a brand identity</p> <p><b>50</b> ■ WORKSHOP<br/>Master architectural retouching</p> <p><b>56</b> ■ HOW I MADE<br/><i>Hypnosis</i></p> | <p><b>60</b> ■ WORKSHOP<br/>Design a vintage-style travel poster</p> <p><b>66</b> ■ WORKSHOP<br/>Fantasy matte painting</p> <p><b>72</b> ■ INDUSTRY FEATURE<br/>25 tips for comic artists</p> <p><b>86</b> ■ READER INTERVIEW<br/>Establish your signature style</p> <p><b>90</b> ■ RESOURCE PROJECT<br/>Capture wood grain textures</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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### 50 | MASTER ARCHITECTURAL RETOUCHING



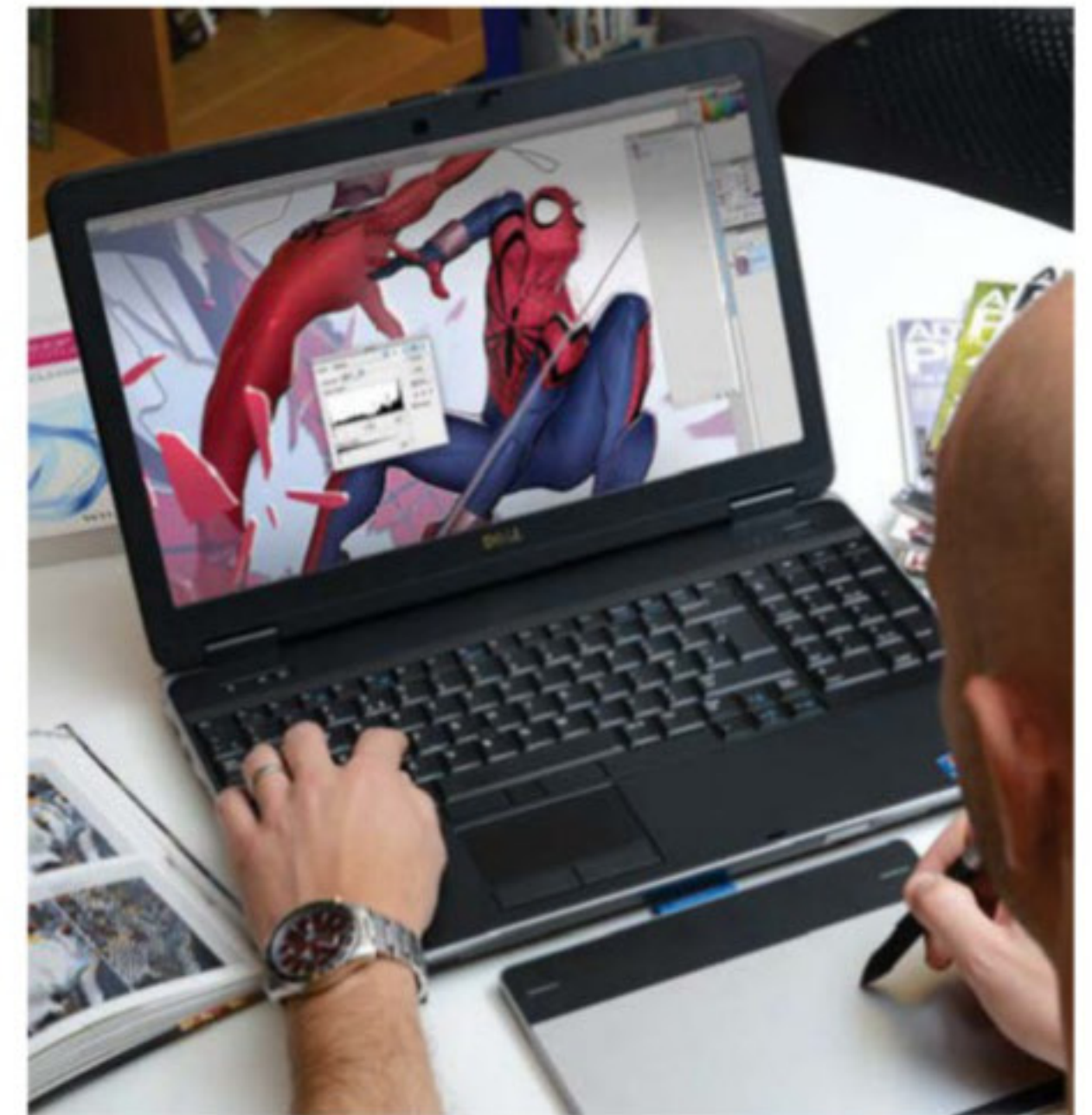
### 72 | 25 TIPS FOR COMIC ARTISTS



## REVIEWS

We put the latest creative kit and apps to the test

- 82** FEATURE:  
Dell Precision M2800



## 96 RESOURCES



Free with issue 128 of  
Advanced Photoshop

## TAILOR-MADE CREATIVE CONTENT

Follow along with our expert video tuition  
from Photoshop pro Kirk Nelson



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- Video tutorials
- Inspirational gallery images



# ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP® PRO PANEL

SOME OF THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE INDUSTRY GIVE THEIR TOP TIPS AND ADVICE FOR IMPROVING YOUR PHOTOSHOP ARTWORK

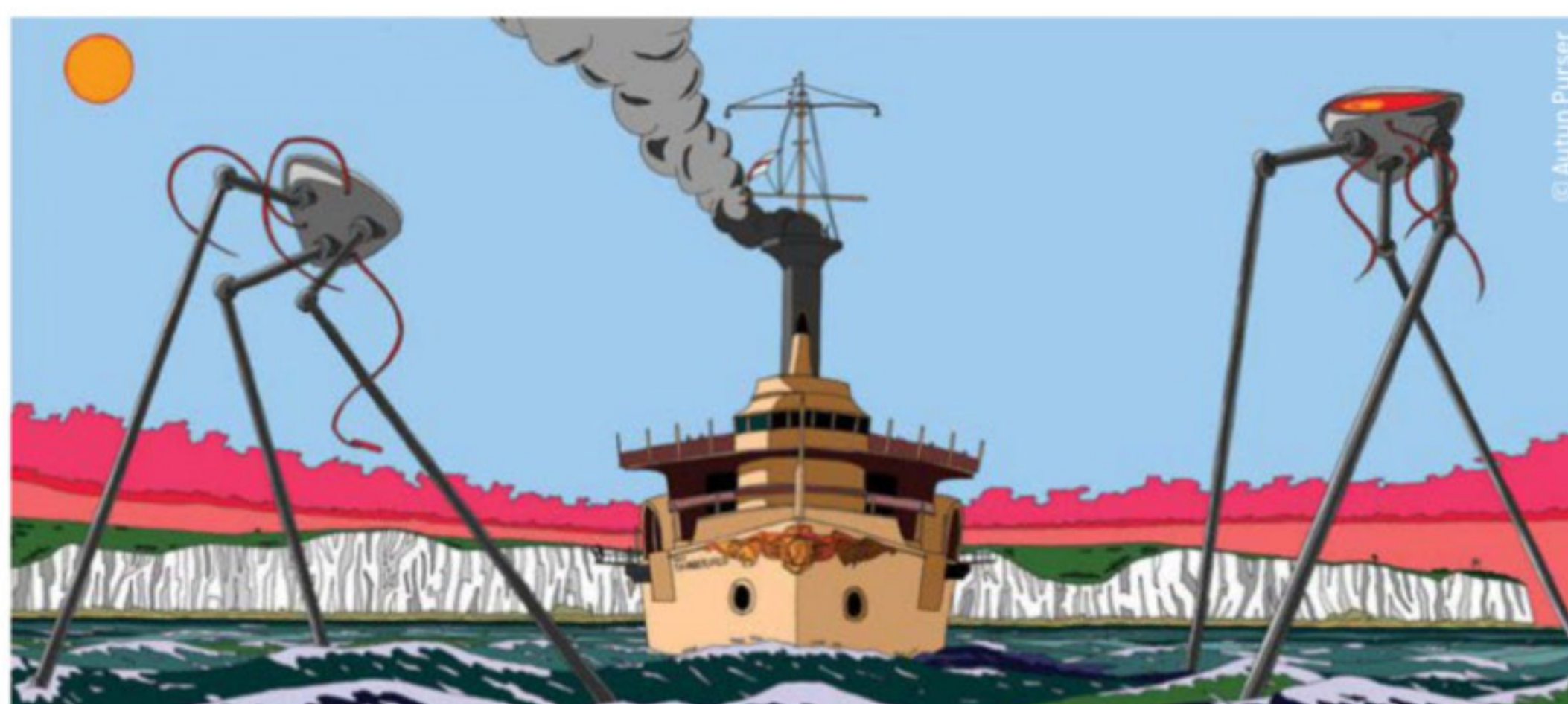


## AUTUN PURSER

[www.apillustration.co.uk](http://www.apillustration.co.uk)

Provide image depth and fine-tune compositions with layers. In this image, the Martian Walker legs are positioned within a foreground of various wave crests to create depth (each hand-drawn, scanned and coloured in Photoshop as separate layers). By moving scanned components around within a retro poster, satisfactory image balance is easier to achieve than was possible historically.

■ Explore retro-inspired poster design and composition in Autun Purser's tutorial on p60



“Understanding the light sources, and how they affect the various objects within the image, is critical to making your composites believable”

JOHN ROSS / [WWW.THEARTOFRETOUCHING.COM](http://WWW.THEARTOFRETOUCHING.COM)



© Tjaard du Plessis



## TJAARD DU PLESSIS

[www.behance.net/tdp1](http://www.behance.net/tdp1)

Photoshop is great for adding texture to illustrations by means of the Dissolve brush mode, as it allows you to create subtle textures. These smaller details significantly enhance an illustration. Select the Brush tool (B) and select the brush preset (a soft brush is most useful). Set the brush mode to Dissolve instead of normal – this allows the brush to scatter the pixels as if it is dissolving – and drag the brush over the desired area.

■ Discover more of Tjaard du Plessis's design and illustration advice in his tutorial on p44





## JOHN ROSS

[www.TheArtOfRetouching.com](http://www.TheArtOfRetouching.com)

While Photoshop might have five different ways of doing anything, knowing which one will do it the best will lead to your success. Understanding the light sources, and how they affect the various objects within the image, is critical to making your composites believable. Learn to play with shadows and highlights, and help them interact with each other to create depth within the image.

■ Learn how to apply more of John Ross's expert photo-editing techniques in his tutorial on architectural retouching on p50



© John Ross

# ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP

The magazine for Adobe® Photoshop® professionals

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# ARTISTS TEAM UP FOR FOTOLIA FINALE

THE FINAL DUO IN FOTOLIA'S EXCELLENT SEASON 3 OF THE TEN COLLECTION SHARE THEIR PSD WORK FOR FREE ON 10 NOVEMBER

**F**otolia has announced the very final collaboration for Season 3 of its TEN Collection, in which an internationally renowned photographer unites with another equally celebrated graphic artist to create a new and unique piece of art every second month. Centered on exploring their combined vision of the future, each piece is then made available for free along with the artists' techniques and source files, including all Photoshop layers, for only 24 hours on Fotolia's website at [tenbyfotolia.com](http://tenbyfotolia.com).

This season has been a truly international effort so far, with every artist coming from a different country and the making-of videos alone being filmed across five of them. The final collaboration coming up in November looks to be no different. Following the footsteps of the previous incredible digital artists and photographer duos of TEN – including Mike Campau, Paul Ripke, Christophe Huet, Mateusz Chmura and Nik Ainley – will officially be designer

Kenichiro Tomiyasu and photographer Kim Mi-kyung with the season's first Asian-themed piece.

The duo's piece will officially be available to download on 10 November 2014 for 24 hours, including the main photo taken during the TEN shoot and used in the TEN creation in low resolution. A tutorial video in which the artists relate their tips and techniques as well as give more information about themselves will also be made available, and a making-of video detailing the workflow of the collaboration from the concept to the shoot and post-production processes of a photomontage.

"This work is inspired by the imaginary concept of [an] Asian utopia, similar to Western ideas of the Garden of Eden, or Paradise," explain Fotolia and the Japanese and Korean duo when asked more about the idea behind their upcoming Fotolia Collection piece. "It is our hope for the future, what we look for, with Nature regaining its true rights and offering luminous peaches, which evoke longevity, prosperity

and vitality as heavenly presents." The utopia, they continue, is free from all of the issues we have in our society, just like the one imagined by the ancient Asian legend.

This season has also featured a contest in which any other artist can create their own image to challenge each of the five artistic Fotolia duos to win prizes from partners such as Adobe, Wacom, and **Advanced Photoshop** magazine! All entrants need to do is create something original using the techniques outlined in the tutorial videos, or come up with a graphic design using the month's theme.

The PSD file of Kenichiro Tomiyasu and Kim Mi-kyung's image, including all the layers, settings and resources, will be available for free for 24 hours from 10am on 10 November 2014.

## ■ MEET KENICHIRO TOMIYASU

Kenichiro Tomiyasu is the founder of INEI Studio, Tokyo. INEI Studio's concept art tries to be faithful to traditional aesthetics and philosophy, through paintings with an unusually deep and dense atmosphere.

INEI Studio produces top-level concept art and matte painting for CG in films, and in videogames such as *Final Fantasy XI*, *Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance*, or *Resident Evil: Damnation*.

## ■ MEET MI KYUNG KIM

Kim Mi-kyung grew up on the famous island of Jeju in South Korea, a place full of natural opportunities for a young photographer. After a visit to England to photograph the wider world, she completed a Master's in photography. She now works with young people, encouraging them into photography. Very passionate about her own creative activity, she held her first private exhibition, *She Is Who She Is*, in 2008, and has held one every year since, as well as several group exhibitions. Her books include *Oh! My Baby* about photography skills, *A Romantic Railway Journey* and *Romance Trip in Jeju*.

**A new collaboration:** The collaborative piece from Kenichiro Tomiyasu and Kim Mi-kyung, free to download on 10th November, was inspired by the concept of an Asian utopia



© INEI and Capcom





# ADOBE UNVEILS MAJOR INNOVATIONS AT IBC

THE LEADER IN CREATIVE SOFTWARE ANNOUNCED PLANS TO UPDATE ADOBE VIDEO DESKTOP APPS

Adobe revealed new capabilities aimed at enabling video professionals to create, collaborate and deliver high-quality productions across multiple screens, with new video desktop apps and Adobe Anywhere for video. At IBC 2014, the company showcased key updates, including support for cutting-edge hardware and standards via Adobe Creative Cloud. There will also be performance enhancements such as accelerated Masking & Tracking; and new GPU-optimised playback that delivers better performance when viewing extremely high-resolution 4K and UltraHD footage from Phantom Cine, Canon RAW and RED R3D files. Streamlined workflows will make it easier to use Adobe CC video apps, including Timeline Views in Adobe Premiere Pro CC; Curve adjustments and Look Hover previews in Adobe SpeedGrade CC; and Rough Cut Dissolves and keyboard shortcuts for tagging in Adobe Prelude CC.

Bill Roberts, senior director of professional video

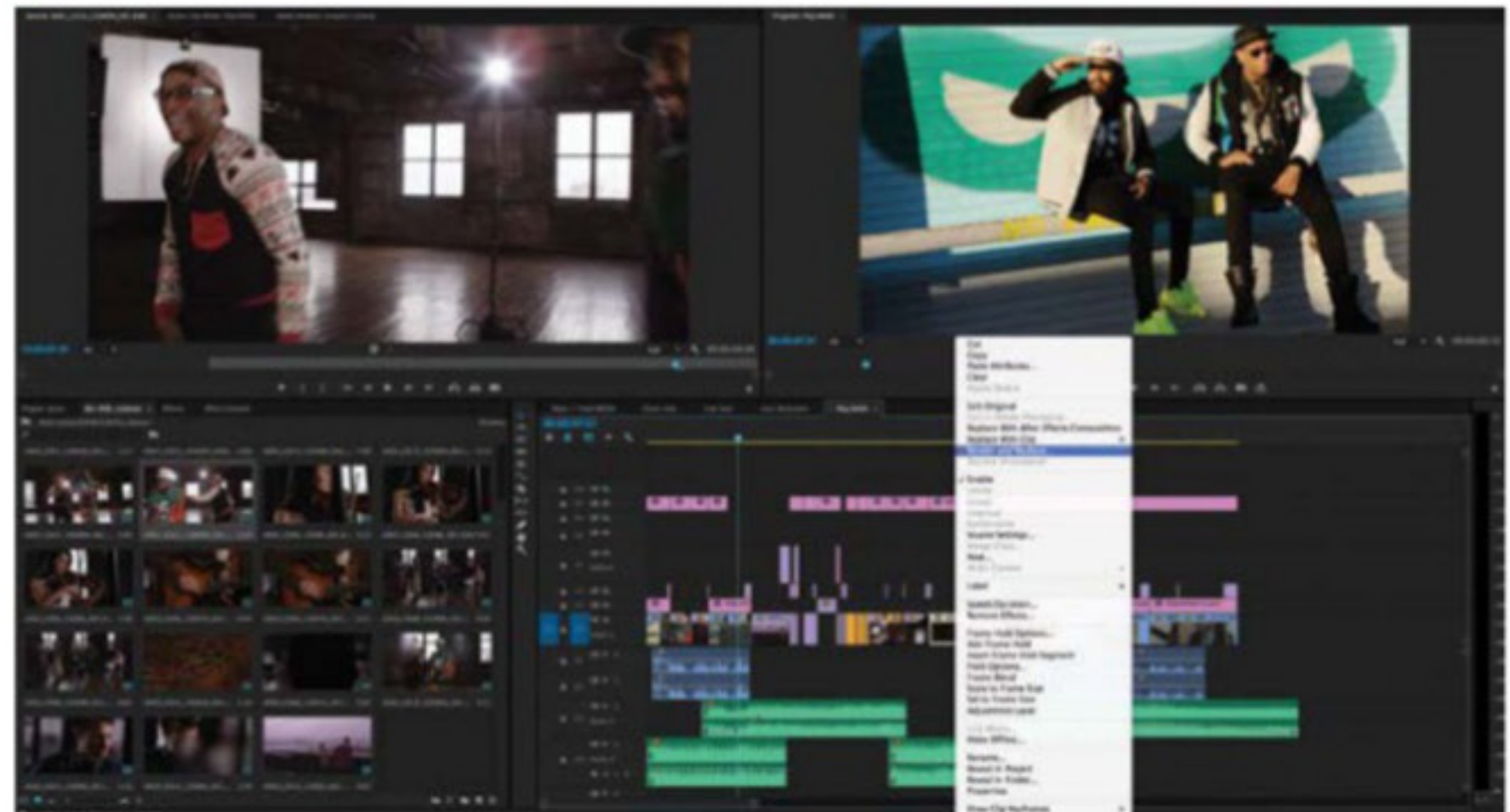
**New updates:** Adobe announces major innovations for video technology at this year's IBC in Amsterdam

product management at Adobe, explained: "As the video and broadcast industries continue to rapidly evolve, so too does Adobe's video technology. With Creative Cloud, we have accelerated the rate at which we deliver the features our customers need to create compelling new experiences and transform the video industry with high-quality productions."

Adobe also announced important updates planned for Adobe Anywhere, a collaborative workflow platform that enables large virtual teams of talent to

collaborate and efficiently shoot, log, edit, share and finish video productions, together with solutions such as Adobe Premiere Pro CC and Adobe After Effects CC.

The updates to Creative Cloud professional video products and Adobe Anywhere for video are expected to ship in the weeks following IBC, a time in which Adobe will also host MAX, the creativity conference, in Los Angeles to share on further innovations and updates coming to the Creative Cloud.



# SERIF LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE RASTER/VECTOR GRAPHICS HYBRID

WITH A COMBINATION OF VECTOR AND RASTER GRAPHICS AND AN INCREDIBLY FAST PERFORMANCE, THIS IS A NEW TOOL TO LOOK OUT FOR

Nottingham-based Serif, which was founded in 1987 with the aim to develop low-cost alternatives to high-end publishing and graphics packages for PC, has officially launched their new Affinity Designer, developed from the ground up specifically for Mac. Launched on the Apple store for £35/\$50, it represents a middle-ground in price when compared to other digital-painting tools offering the same scalable mark-making, such as PaintTool SAI for Windows machines (¥5250, approx £30/\$50) and the \$65 Mischief, which can be downloaded on both Windows and Mac.

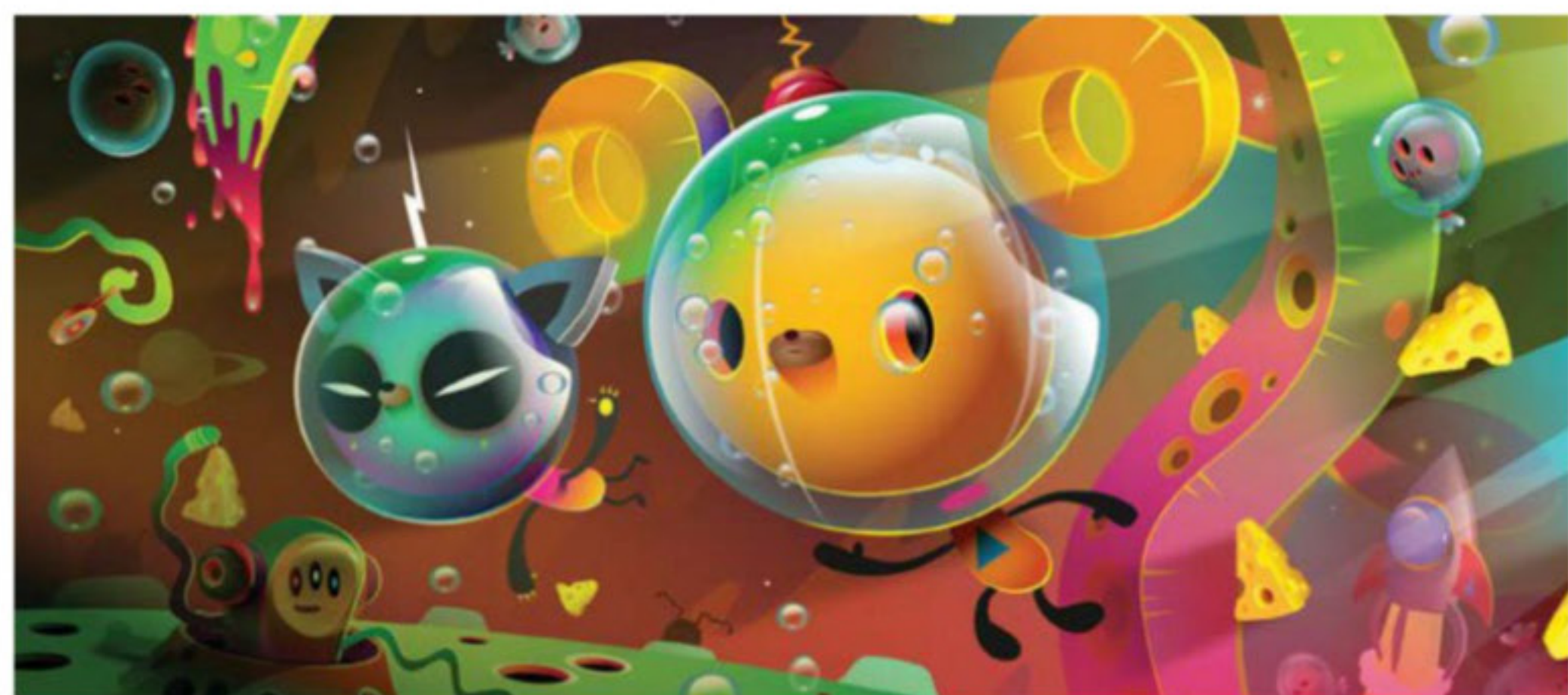
Like Mischief, Affinity Designer boasts an impressive UI and clean graphics, as well as a variety of features all aimed at optimising the artists' experience through highly responsive performance. The vector graphic design software supports PSD, PDF, SVG, and AI files among others, and features real-time speeds with panning and zooming always live at 60fps. Other features include a zoom-in of over 1,000,000%, a live pixel and retina view of vector artwork, wireframe view and split-screen mode, professional CMYK, LAB, RGB and Grayscale colour models, full 16-bit-per-channel editing,

and end-to-end ICC colour management. The toolset users can choose from is also impressively vast, with Affinity Designer offering everything from vector tools, a pen tool, node tool, curve editing, geometry operations, and smart shape tools to live effects, blend modes, image adjustments, raster tools for texturing, masking and finishing artwork and text handling including comprehensive support for OpenType.

**More information:** Visit the Serif Affinity website at [affinity.serif.com](http://affinity.serif.com) for more information on the release, as well as what the coming months will bring

"Affinity Designer is £35/\$50 with no subscription," stated the Serif team at launch, revealing that they are planning on releasing updates such as a mesh fill tool, text on a path, trim and bleed control and much more over the coming months, all distributed to users as free upgrades.

**Gradient tool:** Screenshot showcasing Affinity's gradient tool in action. Other tools include a raster brush, selection brush, smart shapes, and a pen tool







showcase.digiwiz.se

# RETOUCH, RETOUCH, RETOUCH

FIND OUT WHY DIGITAL ARTIST TOBIAS HELLSTRÖM BELIEVES IT IS STILL ALL ABOUT PHOTOSHOP...

**H**aving worked in the creative industry for over ten years, digital artist Tobias Hellström has seen it all. Starting his career using Photoshop CS2 and now having championed the latest that Adobe has to offer, Hellström has been privy to almost every version of Photoshop on offer, including seeing the release of much-anticipated tool updates that today's graphic designers could not do without. How did he manage so well? Read on to discover how he mastered the art of commercial imaging.

## HOW DID YOU FIND YOURSELF CREATING DIGITAL ART?

I started as a kid with my Amiga 500. I would sit there every day creating quite advanced stuff with the mouse and painting pixel by pixel, and then I carried on creating with an airbrush. When I was introduced to Photoshop 2.0, I loved it! With layer support in Photoshop 3.0, I started using it to create sketches for my airbrush art, but at the time the RAM limitation made it quite difficult to work professionally with 'just' a computer. Since technology has now moved forward and prices have dropped, I only work digitally.

## IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT MOVING INTO THE COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING ARENA?

The best thing is getting paid for doing what you love. The second thing is that little ego boost pointing at a major advertising campaign saying, "I made that", especially when I worked with Paramount Pictures and made DVD movie covers. But moving to commercial has its downsides too. Some jobs are very controlled and you don't have that artistic freedom you have as an amateur. Some jobs are very monotonous – like fixing pictures for large catalogues with many different products.

## WHAT HAS BEEN THE HARDEST LEARNING CURVE FOR YOU?

3D. I wanted to master 3D since I was a child, but it seems to take way too much time. I've seen 3D artists working on just one object for days and in the same amount of time, I've finished a whole picture.

So I have kind of given up on it. Mastering the Pen tool was also quite a challenge. I got a job cutting out the background of 999 pictures and only had only a couple of days to do it. Since then I've had no problem cutting out objects and I'm very happy that I did it, because I know a lot of artists that just hate cutting out and find it very hard.

## DO YOU HAVE ANY EFFECTS THAT YOU ALWAYS TRY TO CREATE IN YOUR IMAGES?

No, not really. I work with the pictures until I get the result that I like. I have noticed that I use Photoshop very differently to younger people. I guess it's because I started out with Photoshop at a time when a lot of tools weren't invented yet. For instance, I usually make my own drop shadows, and when I have jobs that are more controlled you usually don't see that it's my picture. If I didn't have the ability to switch styles I don't think I would be able to do this full time.

“I have noticed that I use Photoshop very differently to younger people. I guess it's because I started out with Photoshop at a time when a lot of tools weren't invented yet”

**Extreme Durability:** I took a T-shirt, ripped it apart and made a colleague wear it. I then took photos and retouched out the human, utilising both photography and Photoshop



© Tobias Hellström





© Tobias Hellström

**One Wheel To Tame Them All:** It's a spin-off of *The Lord Of The Rings*, which was popular back then. The car and dragon are 3D rendered and then composited in Photoshop



© Tobias Hellström

**Elvis The Dog:** Part of a bigger series of misbehaving dog portraits. It's mostly made for fun and actually, the first bulldog I completed was published in an older issue of *Advanced Photoshop!*





**Petter Stordalen:**  
A magazine cover of a famous businessman. I only received a portrait shot of him, so I took a picture of a guy in a suit and added his head. I got complaints that it looked too realistic, so I had to filter it to look more like an illustration

© Tobias Hellström



**COULD YOU TELL US WHAT YOUR MOST RECENT COMMISSION WAS?**

Some jobs require you to sign a non-disclosure agreement prohibiting you from mentioning it, so I can't tell you everything, but the latest not-so-secret work I produced was a magazine cover of two Swedish politicians wearing boxing gloves. I used pictures of the politicians' heads and photographed my own body wearing boxing gloves.

My most recent advertising job was Blåkläder workwear, in which I was asked to illustrate how a boot looked on the inside in layers. The only problem was that they were, like, completely indestructible, so there was no physical way to take them apart. In the end it involved a lot of guesswork and illustration.

**HOW DO YOU CREATE THE VIBRANT COLOURS IN YOUR WORK?**

My colleagues say it's because I haven't calibrated my monitor! But the thing is that a lot of areas involve handmade illustrations and I start off using bright colours, as I think it's more effective in advertising. When I'm finished with a picture I flatten it and create a layer on top. I then use the layer blend mode set to Overlay and blur the picture quite a lot and reduce the opacity. For some reason I always prefer the pictures that way. I get contrast and brighter colours.

**CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR DIGITAL RETOUCHING WORK?**

My work is very varied. As a retoucher I always face new challenges, from colour-correcting to changing a model's underwear on a fashion shoot. The variety of jobs never ceases to amaze me. People usually start by asking, "Is it possible...?" My motto is: if you can imagine it, I can do it. Most of the time I do the photography myself, and it's good because it's the only time I get away from my computer.

**WHO WOULD YOU SAY INFLUENCED OR STILL INFLUENCES YOUR WORK?**

As an illustrator I was very inspired by fantasy artists like Boris Vallejo, Luis Royo, Simon Bisley and Hajime Sorayama. But when it comes to digital art I really have none. I started with Photoshop so early that there weren't many people to get inspired by. Today, the internet is full of talented people and I see new images every day. Unfortunately, there are so many that I don't even remember their names.

**WHICH IS THE MOST EXCITING CAMPAIGN YOU HAVE HAD THE PLEASURE OF WORKING ON?**

Definitely the ABS Wheels poster campaign – it even took me to Las Vegas. Another one I remember was the Santa Maria campaign for Mexican food; it was my first 100 per cent self-made national campaign. Everyone seemed to like it and it made me confident enough to quit my retouching job at an ad agency; a decision that has been very good for me. After that I

**Ford Spare Parts, Man's Best Friend:** This image was built from placing many different parts together. I got a whole box full of spare vehicle parts, photographed each part and built a dog in Photoshop before compositing them all together



© Ford

**Boot:** This was a product shoot of a Blåkläder boot for one of their advertisements



© Blåkläder





© Atlet



**Pimp Your Truck:** These images are all from a campaign for Atlet trucks showing how customisable they are. They are all photographs composited in Photoshop

got much more freedom in my jobs and I took my images and salary to a higher level.

## WHAT DO YOU FEEL SEPARATES YOUR ARTWORK FROM THE OTHERS?

If you compare my imaging to sound, I always strive to be louder than the rest. My goal is that if I get an ad in a magazine, people should remember it. I like subtle images, but from an advertising point of view they are not effective. One thing that may separate me is that I'm self-taught, which makes me do things that are not by the book.

“My goal is that if I get an ad in a magazine, people should remember it. I like subtle images, but from an advertising point of view they are not effective”

## TELL US WHAT ROLE PHOTOSHOP PLAYS IN YOUR WORK?

It's like asking a guitarist what role his guitar plays! Photoshop is everything. I use it 99.5 per cent of the time and I never really used anything else. I'm so old I date 'pre-Photoshop', and in those days I used a real airbrush gun spraying on real printed photos. I

guess it sounds insanely old-fashioned now but I felt quite high-tech back then. Today I'm quite happy to comfortably work in front of my computer without any mess.

## DO YOU HAVE A REGULAR SET OF TOOLS THAT YOU ALWAYS USE?

Liquify and Warp are two tools that completely changed the way I used Photoshop. I guess I use at least one of the tools in all of my pictures at least once. It's hard to think how I used Photoshop before those tools were added.

## WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?

I don't know really, it feels like I have already reached my goals being paid for what I always wanted to do. I have been in the industry for about ten years now, and one thing I have learnt is that you always have to be ahead of your game. You always have to be prepared that your market could suddenly die, so it's important to have a different skill-set ready. I survived by being able to switch between retoucher to Flash animator to web designer to photographer to product designer.



**Doggy Fightclub:** This was just a picture I made for fun. I do some work for dog-food companies and I always send them my new pictures, hoping they want something new for their ads

© Tobias Hellström

## PORTFOLIO TIPS

HELLSTRÖM DISCUSSES HIS TOP TIPS FOR ADDING REALISM TO YOUR IMAGES

### ■ SHADOW PLACEMENT

Always think about shadows. Everything casts a shadow and if you correctly place them, it really adds to your image. For a typical object I would create a couple of shadow layers and add them to the picture. Remember to use a shadow colour that matches your image and build the shadow layer in Multiply mode.

### ■ ADD VIBRANCY

When a picture is done, copy a flattened version to an extra layer, blur it quite a lot and use the Overlay blend mode to change the opacity until it looks good. This will build contrast and add vibrant colours. If it's too much, reduce the colours in the blurred layer.

### ■ TEXTURISE

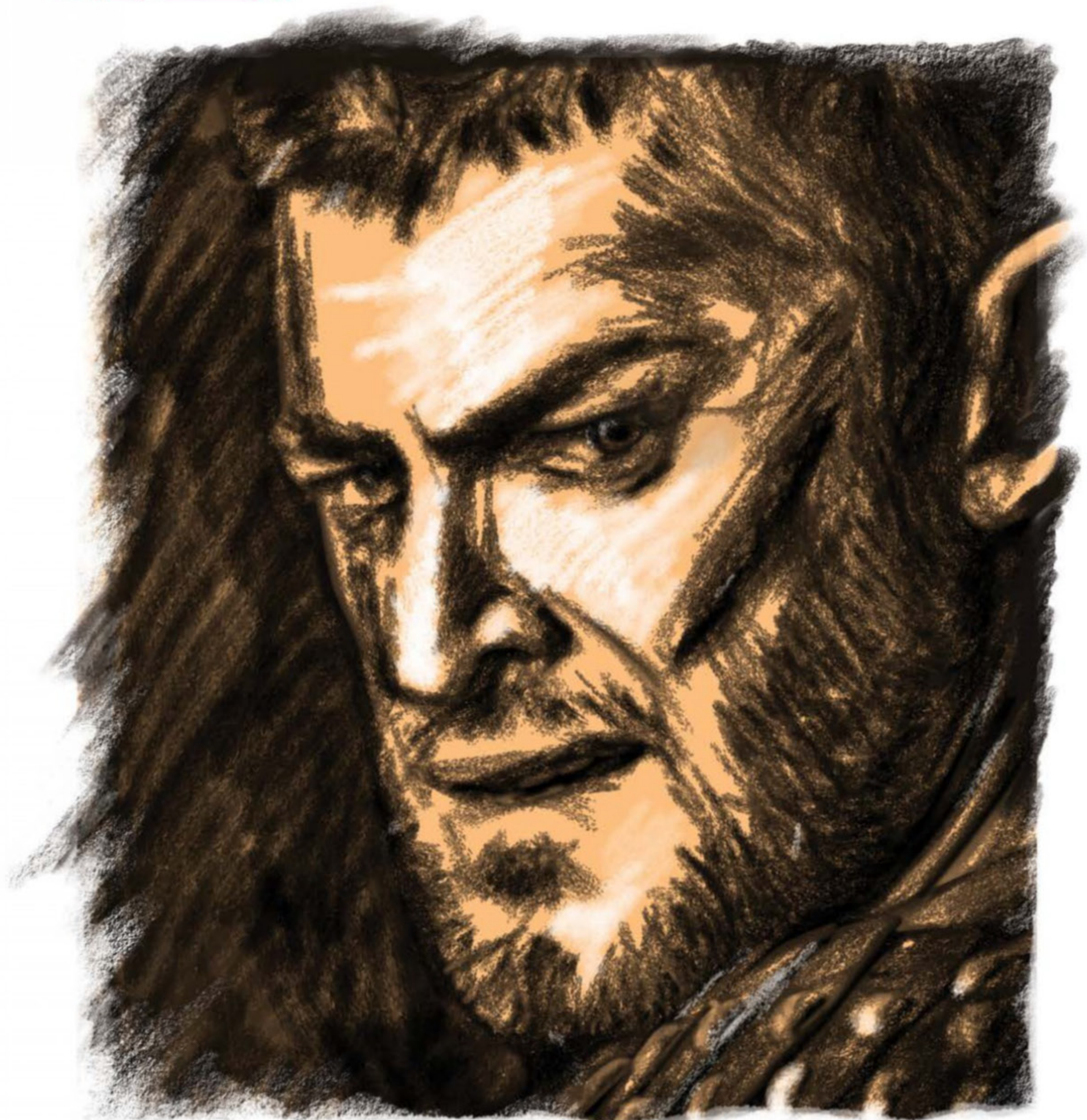
Use textures. If a surface looks flat or uninteresting, use a texture. Put it in your scene and use the Warp tool to position it in so it follows the same curves and angles. Test out different blend modes and opacity values to see what looks best. Use the Eraser to fix edges and make it blend in. This is especially useful when working with clean 3D renders.





# Charcoal

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CREATIVE TOOLS FOR CREATIVE PEOPLE



# CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN

ORLIN CULTURE SHOP'S BRIAN MILLER REVEALS HOW HE BECAME PASSIONATE ABOUT ILLUSTRATING OUTDOOR SCENES, AND WHAT IT TAKES TO CREATE THEM

**ABOUT THE ARTIST**  
**BRIAN EDWARD MILLER**  
[www.OrlinCultureShop.com](http://www.OrlinCultureShop.com)



Miller is the owner and illustrator at Orlin Culture Shop, based in Erie, Colorado, USA.

**NAME OF PROJECT**  
**EVERY MOUNTAIN**

"I've been drawing since I was old enough to hold a crayon," begins Brian Edward Miller, owner and illustrator at Orlin Culture Shop, "though I took a significant break from the pursuit after a teacher at high school convinced me I'd never make money as a comic book artist."

After being discouraged by his teacher, Miller reveals he ultimately pursued graphic design instead, and spent a decade working for interactive agencies, action sports companies, and in videogames; only pausing to practise his drawing skills during any free time he had. Slowly, Miller began to gain opportunities from illustration as well as graphic design. Then, after the studios he was working for shut down, he made the leap into doing what his teacher never thought he would: he went into illustration full time, starting his very own company, Orlin Culture Shop.

Drawing the outdoors, however, was something Miller didn't realise he could do until just a few years ago. "My sketchbooks, up until that point, were filled

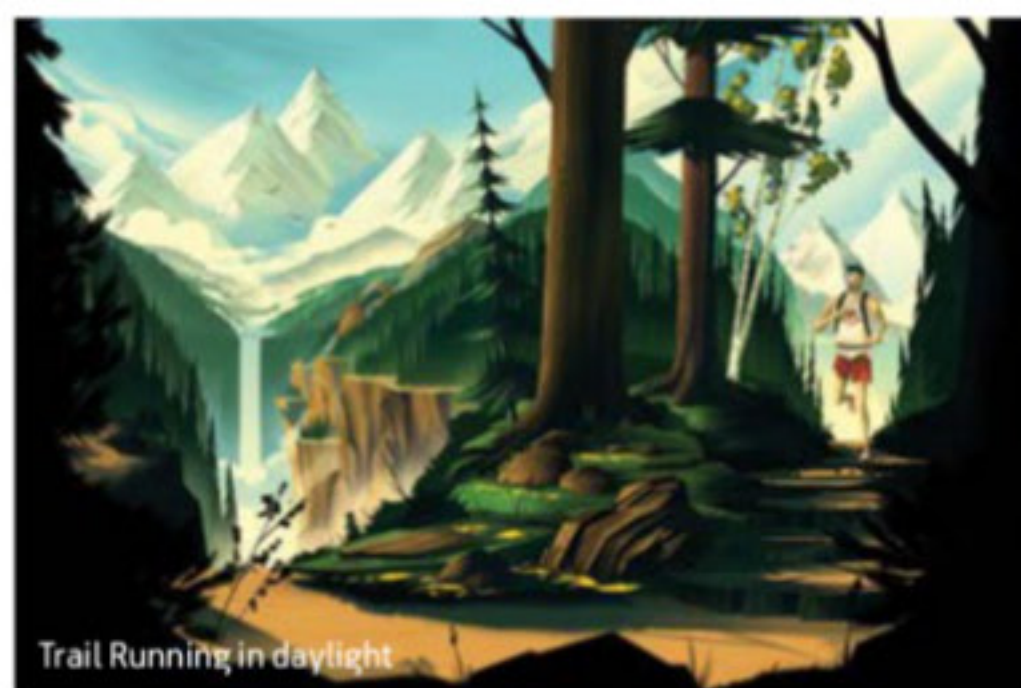
with comic book figures, monsters, creatures, that sort of thing," Miller continues. "People responded so well to the few outdoor illustrations I did, I decided to try a few more and discovered a passion for them." For Australian-based company, Every Mountain, the passion was a perfect way to show off their brand.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PHOTOSHOP WITHIN YOUR WORK?**

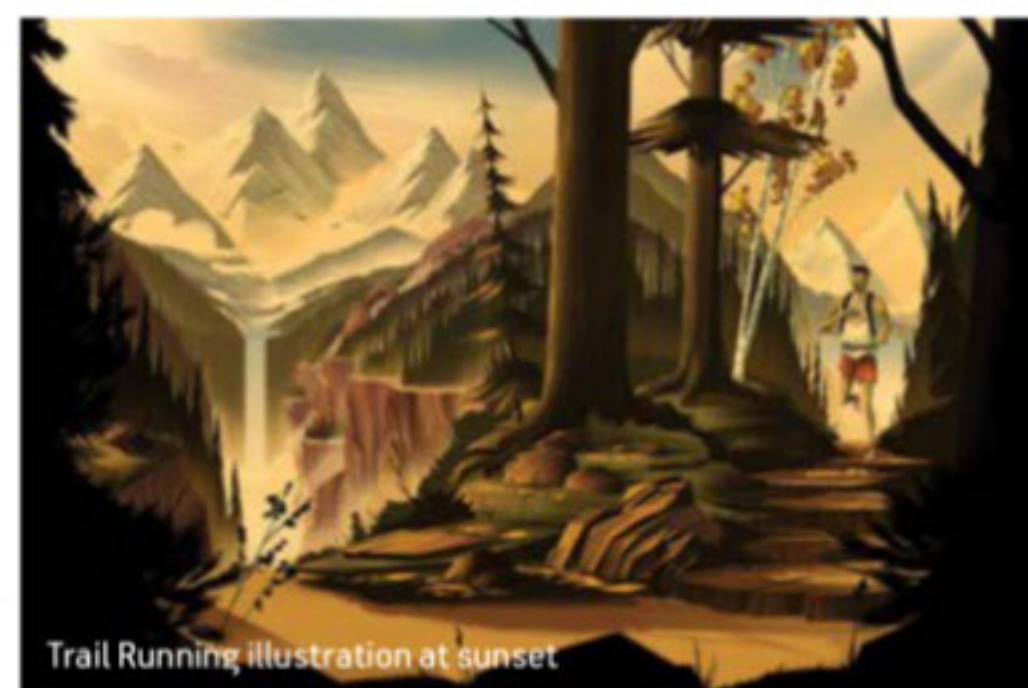
Tumultuous! I am notorious for having a touch of death when it comes to computers crashing and programs quitting, and that's painful news since I work 100 per cent digitally on most pieces. Photoshop and I have a history of battles dating back to 1998, but I'm happy to say the last few versions, especially Photoshop CC, introduced stability to the program that even I haven't been able to wreck (with the exception of a few incidents...). Every iteration they release has improvements I've enjoyed incorporating into my workflow, and I can't imagine switching to another app.



Trail Running initial sketch



Trail Running in daylight



Trail Running illustration at sunset



The Lodge illustration

All images © Brian Edward Miller





I focus on feeling when choosing my colour palette and think back to when I was a kid growing up in Colorado for my inspiration. Look into your past and you'll find your voice.

The textures were created using custom pressure-sensitive brushes and a Wacom Cintiq.

I try to render objects in an ideal, iconic way. I don't strive for realism, but I try to ground my stylisation in it.

Alpine illustration in fading light

### HOW WERE YOU FIRST APPROACHED BY THE CLIENT TO START WORKING ON THE EVERY MOUNTAIN PROJECT?

The client for Every Mountain found me online through one of my sites, most likely Behance, and responded well to other outdoor illustrations I'd done in the past. It was a great reminder to me that clients, if they like your work, will approach you to do what they see you've already done – ie, fill your portfolio with outdoor illustrations. Chances are you'll be asked to do more!

My client was great in giving me initial direction followed by enough creative freedom for me to explore. That exploration is what led to the changing times of day simulation. I presented a few colour options, which the client loved, and eventually decided to incorporate both.

### WHAT WAS THE OVERALL WORKFLOW LIKE FOR CREATING THE FINAL SERIES OF ILLUSTRATIONS?

[It] was very similar to the workflow I follow for the majority of my projects. After a series of conversations to understand my client's needs, I spend some time researching and sketching out various ideas. I will then typically present two or

three rough sketches and, after the client selects the direction that best fits their needs, I move onto creating the final piece. To create the final, I usually work in black and white to block in my values, establish my lighting and brushwork before moving onto colour. Doing it this way gives me the focus that I need to make sure each element in the piece is working, and it also keeps me grounded at the right times.

### WHAT WERE THE MAIN BRUSHES, TOOLS, AND TECHNIQUES YOU USED TO CREATE THE ILLUSTRATIONS? YOUR SKETCHES LOOK ABSOLUTELY FANTASTIC!

For sketching, I use a simple hard round brush with pressure sensitivity since I'm using a Wacom Cintiq to draw. For colouring, I use a combination of pressure-sensitive brushes I've customised to get the grainy look I'm after, which harkens back to the gouache painters I've loved since I was a kid. The more I think about it, the more I realise I've picked up techniques from Bob Ross.

Once in a while I'll use layer shapes or Lasso tools when I need a hard or ruled edge. I don't use filters or anything like that as I like to keep the process as simple and straightforward as possible, but I will use

colour sliders to explore different colour combos.

For speedpainting, my process is scaled back: less layers, less measuring, and fewer brushes. My goal with speedpainting is to eliminate as many tool distractions as possible so I can focus on the artistic elements of the piece (composition, lighting, camera angles, etc). The challenge I always have with speedpainting is carrying a piece too far. If I carry it too far in the sketch phase, it risks losing life when I finish the piece, which isn't a good thing.

### IS THERE ANY ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE OR SITES YOU COULD RECOMMEND TO A NEWCOMER TO PHOTOSHOP?

My best advice is to determine what kind of learner you are and approach Photoshop with that thought in mind. If you're like me and enjoy learning by doing, determine your end goal with Photoshop and create a project for yourself. For instance, if you want to become a digital illustrator, give yourself an illustration assignment (or have a friend give you one if you're indecisive), create a deadline (most important step!), and figure it out through experimentation. There are so many great resources online to help you with this – it really eliminates any excuses.





# LIGHTFARM BRAZIL

THE THIRD INDEPENDENT BRANCH OF THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL LIGHTFARM STUDIOS HAS LANDED IN LATIN AMERICA. WE SPEAK TO ITS DIRECTORS TO FIND OUT HOW THEY PLAN TO CONTINUE THE SUCCESS STORY IN ITS NEW LOCATION

**L**ightfarm Brazil is a new venture, only launching in March 2014. However, Lightfarm Studios already has a fantastic reputation thanks to its studios in Australia and New Zealand.

And it's New Zealand, the original base, where the story of the Rio de Janeiro setup begins. Brazilian partners Rafael Vallaperde and Milton Menezes both started work for Lightfarm Studios in New Zealand. After three years, they began negotiations to launch a Lightfarm in Brazil to cater to Latin America clients. "We became good friends with Denny (Lightfarm New Zealand) and Simon (Lightfarm Australia)," explains Menezes. "This made [it] possible for us to continue developing the brand in our home country." The Brazil team now offers a full-service production including CGI, retouching, post-production and photography.

Milton Menezes is enthusiastic about Lightfarm Studios and making the newest branch of the brand a huge triumph: "It feels great to be back home and still working the same way I used to do in New Zealand. I love working on a big team of ten people, which is growing so fast. It's been six months since our launch and the feedback from our clients is amazing. I hope to develop Lightfarm the best way I can along with my partners at Lightfarm New Zealand and Australia. Lightfarm always had this easy-going mood, which I realised is the best and only way to keep our employees happy and excited about the company."

Having "happy and excited" employees is certainly one of the secrets of success for Lightfarm Brazil, but the studio equally stands out from its peers thanks to the quality of work that it produces. "I believe we have very strong in-house art direction and that's definitely a game changer," says director of CG, Rafael Vallaperde. "We're not only skilled with the craft, but also with the concept, and always try to over-deliver. A nice idea always beats a pretty image... and we do both." Menezes agrees with this, saying that it's the studio's imagination that sets it apart from others: "Our job is to use art form for advertising. It's a challenging profession and an even more challenging goal to build artworks that are directed by so many people. It's an endless, healthy battle to make both the agency and client relaxed about the project results."

Clearly, Lightfarm isn't likely to shy away from a challenge, and both accepts client projects and takes on its own ventures to push the boundaries of what it



“We’re not only skilled with the craft, but also with the concept, and always try to over-deliver. A nice idea always beats a pretty image... and we do both”





#### ABOUT THE STUDIO

##### LIGHTFARM BRAZIL

[www.lightfarmbrasil.com](http://www.lightfarmbrasil.com)

[lightfarmbrasil](#)

Lightfarm Studios is a growing multinational company specialising in image/content creation for advertising, with studios in New Zealand, Australia and Brazil, and agent representation care of the prestigious Bernstein & Andriulli covering the USA, UK and China.



Milton Menezes,  
Director of Creative  
Retouching



Rafael Vallaperde,  
Director of CG

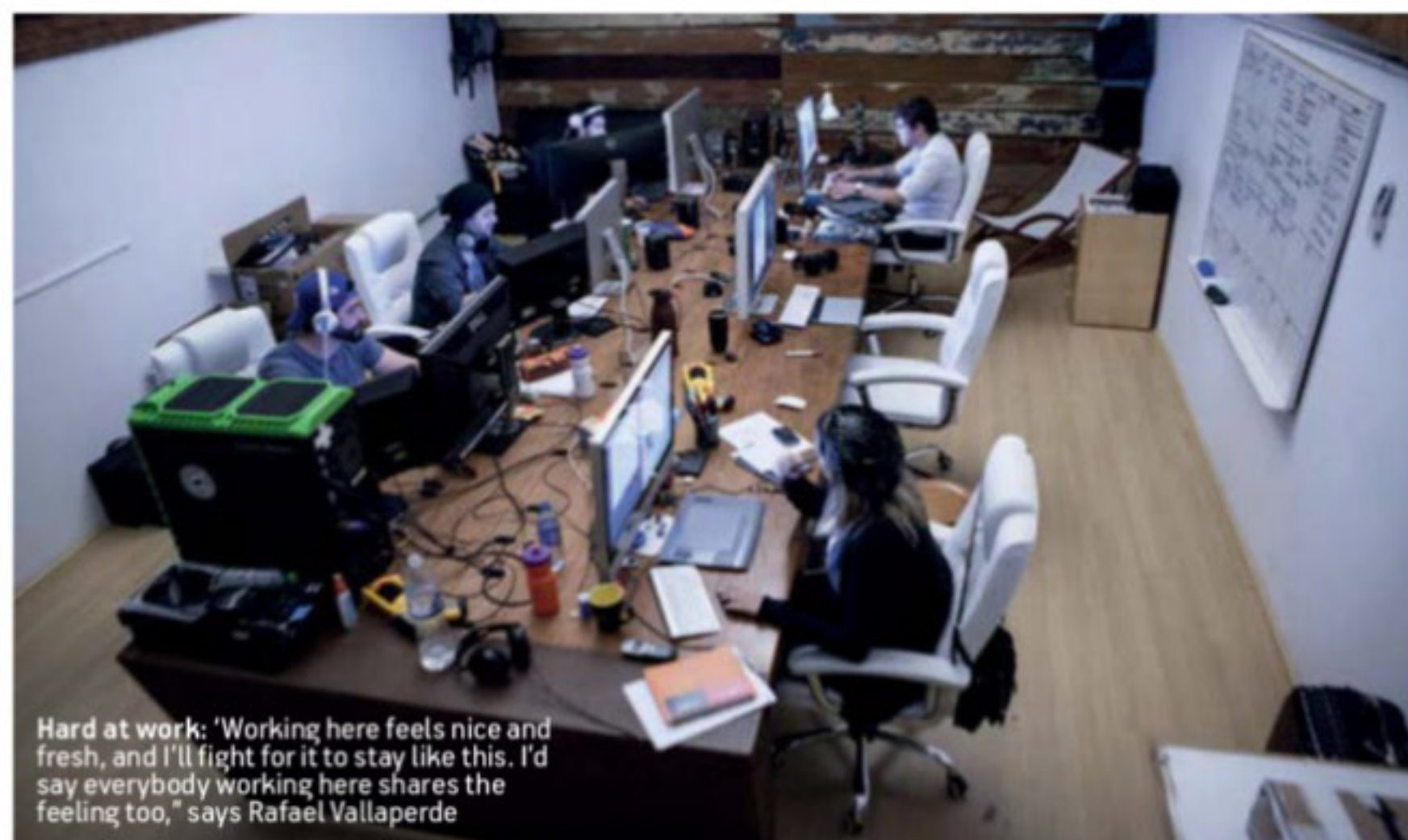
The Lightfarm crew: "We have a lot of energy and good mood to make our projects and [impress] our style in both professional and artistic pieces," says Milton Menezes

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**Harmful Nature:** A personal project by Lightfarm Studios. The *Harmful Nature* project has a Making Of video available to view at [www.vimeo.com/85249927](http://www.vimeo.com/85249927)



**Hard at work:** 'Working here feels nice and fresh, and I'll fight for it to stay like this. I'd say everybody working here shares the feeling too,' says Rafael Vallaperde



**Mountain Dew:** Mountain Dew for Colenso BBDO, New Zealand

can do. One particular project that stands out for both Menezes and Vallaperde was a self-initiated piece called *Harmful Nature*, which needed an intense production schedule and a lot of hours to shoot a model underwater, build a full underwater CG environment and mix it all together harmoniously. "The craziest part was revising the camera angle of the scene after having it all set," says Vallaperde. "The shots wouldn't match the back plate, so we had to [go with] plan B. It was almost like starting all over, but plan B became the new plan A. I loved the final result and the job is high on my favourites list."

In order to achieve realistic results on projects like this, the latest technology and software must be used. For its complex 3D work, the studio utilises Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere, Luxology MODO, MAXON CINEMA 4D, Pixologic ZBrush, Autodesk 3ds Max, Marvellous Designer and a whole host of render engines such as Maxwell, V-Ray and Octane. When it comes to creative retouching, however, there is only one program that the team turn to – Photoshop. "The cool thing about 3D is that it is a mash-up of software," says Vallaperde, "Unlike retouching, where Photoshop is the king of the hill,

3D apps [are in] a highly competitive market and there's always something new around the corner."

As a creative retoucher himself, Menezes certainly understands the importance of our favourite Adobe app: "Photoshop is the tool for creative retouchers. Post-production is an essential part of the process and it can make [an image] epic or ruin the whole thing. The creative retoucher needs to know when to be invisible and when to show off. I [have never seen] any software even close to the power of Photoshop. It is always improving and getting better, making our lives easier, faster and more interesting. Every new





## ■ THE VERGE

BY SEAMLESSLY MATTE-PAINTING OVER 100 AERIAL PICTURES OF GIANT PROPORTIONS, LIGHTFARM'S ARTISTS WORKED HARD TO BRING THIS SURREAL IDEA TO LIFE



### 01 | THE CONCEPT

This image was based on the sci-fi books of Arthur C. Clarke. In the concept we had a monolith, but we took it off for the final image as we thought it would be hard for the public to understand the meaning without reading the book. We knew this would be the hardest piece we've ever done.



### 02 | ENVIRONMENT MATTE PAINTING

The search for references and base images was the most important step. We made a lightbox on Shutterstock: 1,000 images of aerial landscapes, clouds and universe elements. It was really hard to find the right sources with appropriate perspective, light, resolution and proper content to fit in the matte paint of the vortex world.



### 03 | CG ASTRONAUT

Meanwhile, we had our 100 per cent CG astronaut in construction. We had a concept using future NASA suit designs and the Red Bull Stratos suit as well. The hardest part was to figure how to make the fabric look as realistic as possible. That was when Marvellous Designer came along.



### 04 | BUILDING THE ASTRONAUT

Using Marvellous, we were able to create a highly detailed fabric simulation to fit the CG astronaut body. Using digital fans to simulate, we got the flow we imagined to make the cloth as dynamic as possible. Mixing fabric with the hard surface elements was quite hard.



### 05 | MIXING IT ALL TOGETHER

The creative retoucher's job is to seamlessly mix all the assets together with great contrast and colours, to always get great depth and make the image pop out of the screen. This whole project is about imagination and our goal was to blow people's minds. We got great feedback and 300,000 views of our 'making of' video on Vimeo.

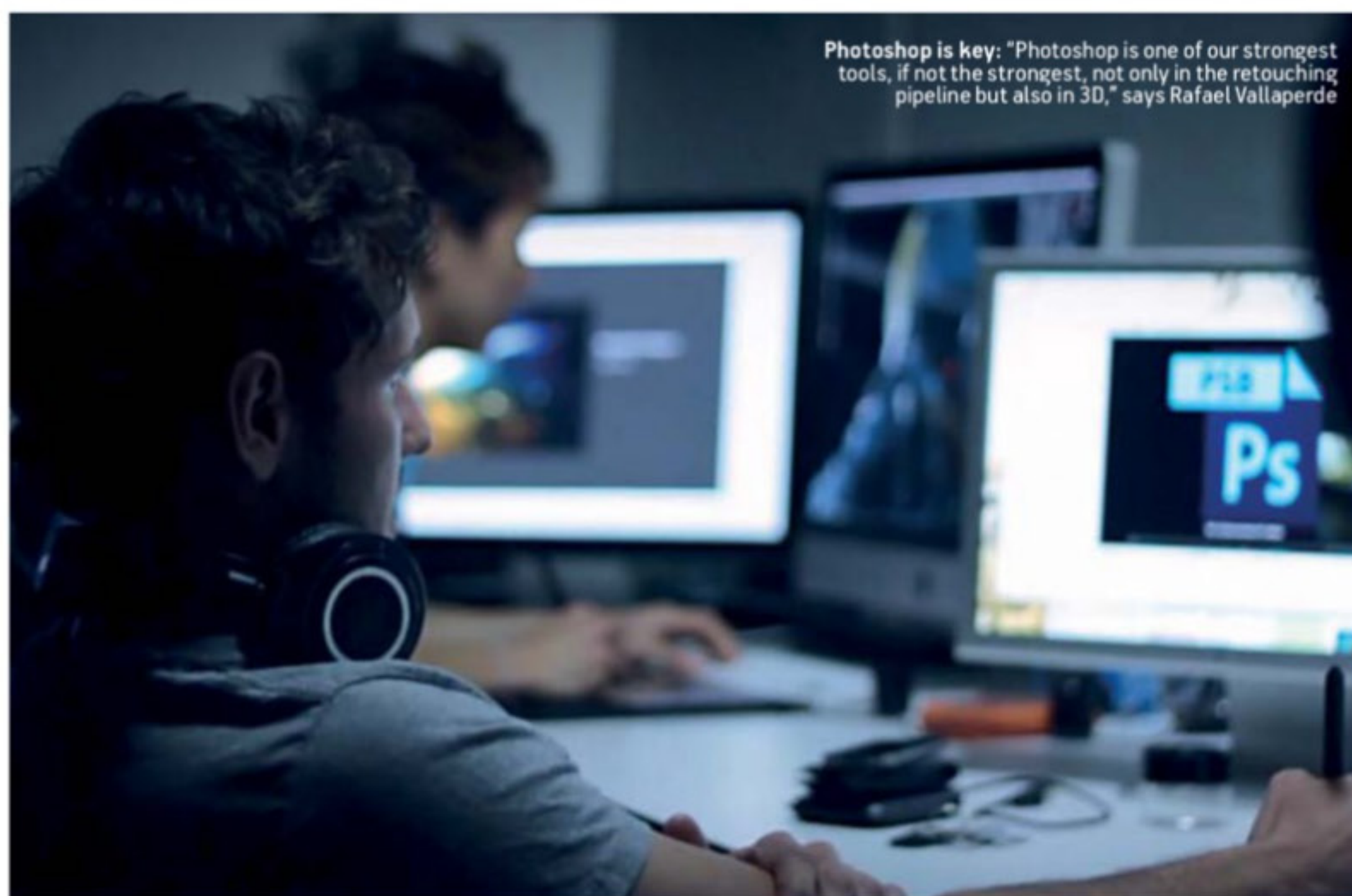


▶ edition of Photoshop opens my eyes to new ways of doing the same thing. It feels great to work on it and I love the software."

While software helps the studio to create amazing concepts and generate new ideas and ways of working, it comes down to how they can use the tools they are given to produce high-quality content. Personal projects, like *Harmful Nature* mentioned earlier, are important to the Lightfarm Brazil team, as it keeps them working on pushing boundaries, says Menezes: "I love our personal projects as [much] as the professional ones that push our limits to the edge. We do all kinds of things to keep the company growing, but the hard ones are the reason why we love what we do."

In order to complete these multi-skilled ventures, the Lightfarm team members each have to bring their skills to the table and work together, especially when working for clients. "We tend to dissect the original briefing layout as much as we can and extract what the creatives behind are trying to communicate. We try to keep the standards very high; criticism is highly encouraged in the studio," explains Vallaperde.

Maintaining those high standards is a must, as Lightfarm is known for the quality of its products, especially when working in such a competitive environment. Menezes says: "Brazil has one of the best advertising markets in the world. The expectations of the clients here are extremely high, especially when we are the studio behind it. We've built a strong folio these [last] five years and the



clients expect nothing less than what we have done before."

Having a solid reputation and a distinctive style is one reason why clients are attracted to working with Lightfarm Brazil, and Menezes says that part of the job is usually to add "creative input" into a campaign: "From brainstorming to post-production, we always give our view to give ourselves the best workflow possible. We treat our clients as professionally as possible without losing our sense of humour. Most of the time we

are able to create and develop big campaigns in the best mood possible, assuring the client of good results with no stress at all."

The studio certainly shows no signs of slowing down; Lightfarm continues to grow worldwide, producing incredible artworks from all three of the brand's studio locations. It will continue to push forward, with Vallaperde saying: "We're definitely going down the video route. After some time working within the print industry, it's time to make that leap."

Menezes says that Lightfarm has no intentions of stopping its pioneering ways and will continue to strive to improve: "I feel the company will not stop growing, and we will push our limits as a company the same way we push our limits on our images and videos. Always doing better than we've done yesterday by fixing our mistakes and refining our workflow."

“ I [have never seen] any software even close to the power of Photoshop. It is always improving and getting better, making our lives easier, faster and more interesting ”

## ■ A DAY IN THE LIFE OF MILTON MENEZES

THE LIGHTFARM STUDIOS DIRECTOR TAKES US THROUGH HIS DAILY ROUTINE



**10:00 | WARMING UP**  
We usually start the day with a to-do list. We need to choose our priorities carefully and work fast. Today we're having a photo shoot that we've planned days earlier so everything is on track, from the production elements to the crew involved.



**12:00 | BEFORE LUNCH**  
When we have art/creative directors around, we try to keep them relaxed and confident about the delivery. We have a big kitchen and we have the creatives having lunch with us today. Our approach with our clients is to make them feel at home.



**13:00 | COFFEE TIME... AND BACK TO WORK!**  
After lunch, a big mug of coffee keeps everyone focused. As a director, I need to make sure the team is doing what they need to do according to the schedule. It's easy when everything is rolling well and the crew is working well together.



“I feel the company will not stop growing, and we will push our limits as a company the same way we push our limits on our images and videos”



Metal Octopus: Lightfarm Studios personal project



Hunger White: Lightfarm Studios personal project

## TOP 5 PRODUCTION TIPS

Rafael Vallaperde shares his essential production secrets

### ■ KEEP YOUR HEAD FRESH

It is easy to get 'fog vision' after working long hours on the same thing. Try to keep it fresh and take breaks; ask for people's advice even if they have got nothing to do with the job.

### ■ SKETCH

Some problems only appear on paper. Make sure you keep sketching and be ahead of them. Also, explaining things to co-workers and clients can be way easier.

### ■ FREE ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS

Brainstorming can be one of the most exciting parts of a project. Make sure you throw it all out of your head and squeeze it to the last drop. After this, play with it all like a giant puzzle.

### ■ BE NICE

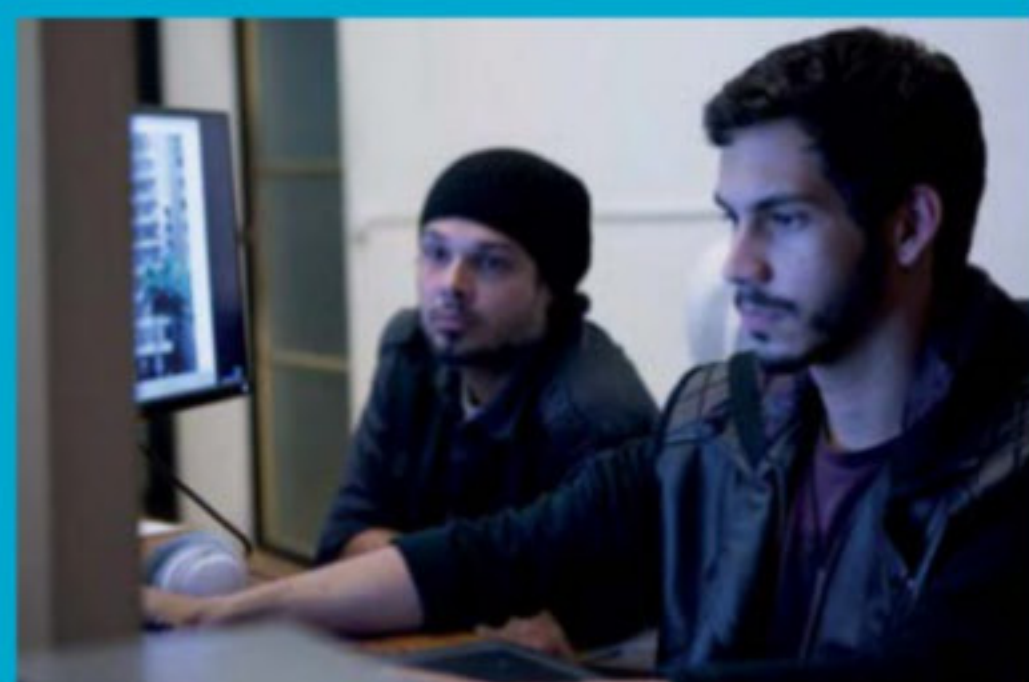
When deadlines are close, make sure that you're 'shielded' with a nice mood and remember that everybody is under the same stress as you are. Be cool, be nice, be kind – and the studio will be a much better place.

### ■ DON'T SPARE ANY EFFORT TO MAKE SOMETHING BETTER

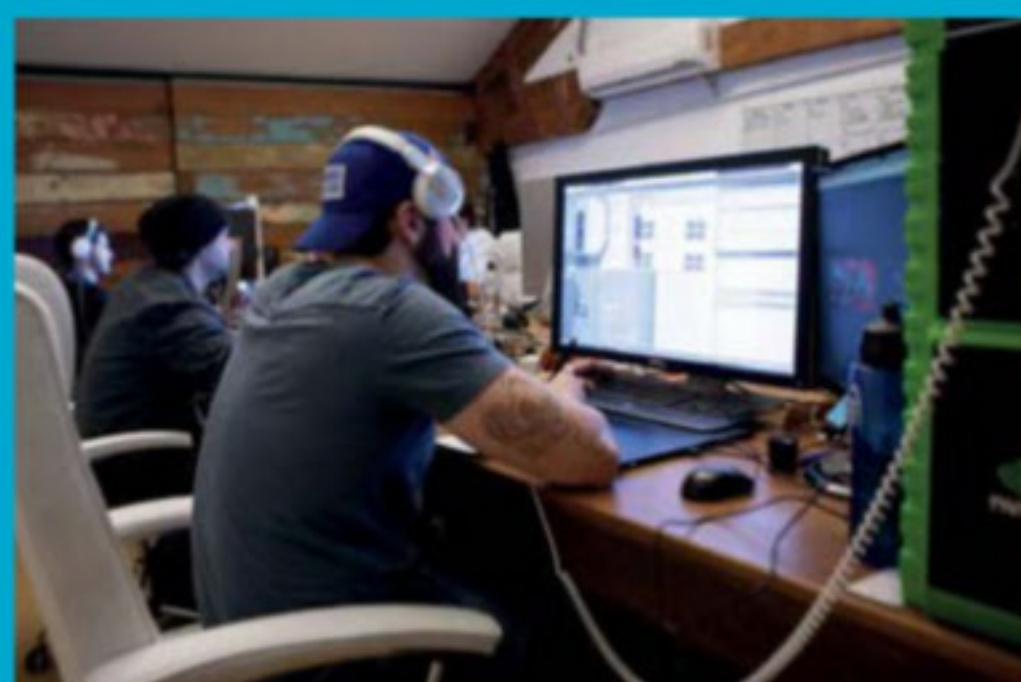
If you see an opportunity to make something better, just go and do it. There's no effort that becomes waste in the universe. Always give your best!



Samsung Curved TV Coliseum: Samsung Curved TV for CHI & Partners, London



**16:00 | ALL HANDS ON DECK** By now we are [working] on so many things at the same time that our production manager goes a bit nuts, running against the end of the day to make sure everything is on track. After the shoot, our CG crew makes sure the photos work well with our CG elements.



**18:00 | DELIVER JOBS** As we work on several jobs a day, today we had two deliveries at 6pm. Our director of production makes sure the client/agency are happy with the results. We always aim for a straight approval, but the reality of it is that most jobs need fixes to satisfy the client.



**19:00 | TIME TO RELAX** If it's 7pm on a Friday night and we're not crazy busy, we take a little time off to have a few deserved beers. We think social interactions and a relaxed environment is key for a strong and united team. We provide our employees with a relaxed and creative work environment.



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**Stipple:** The Stipple brushes are essential for adding tonal variation to skin, re-creating the look of pores and giving a natural rather than plastic appearance. Grab the Stipple 21 brush and set it to 60px in size with Spacing at 35% and dab it over an area of skintone using a slightly lighter shade for a natural effect.



**Mixer brush set to Flat Bristle:** To create the look of locks and strands of hair, grab the Mixer brush and set it to the Flat Bristle brush preset. Change the Spacing to 12%, pick a lighter tone than your basic hair tone and run over it, following the lines of strands and locks. You'll get a subtle, multi-stranded look without it being too crisp.



**Soft Mechanical with Airbrush setting:** The soft round Soft Mechanical brushes get even softer when you check the Airbrush icon on Photoshop's toolbar. This lets you build up colour by how long you stay over an area rather than how much you move around, making it perfect for overlaying base skin and hair tones onto basic shading.



**Dodge:** The Burn brush's opposite number, Dodge adds highlights wherever you need them. It's great for working out shading when you start a painting, but is also amazing at adding a final sheen and glow to hair and skin. Use at tiny sizes to paint flyaway strands of hair catching the light.



**Graphite Pencil:** Use the Graphite Pencil brush to sketch outlines. It's also great for smaller details at later stages, such as eyebrows, eyelashes and flyaway strands of hair.



**Hard Mechanical:** Use the basic round Hard Mechanical to block in areas of colour at the beginning of your image – shading, skintone, hair, basic eye colour; this simple and effective brush is the absolute essential.



**Smudge:** The much-maligned Smudge tool, on its basic Soft Mechanical setting, can be used with care to softly blur in shadows and highlights, to smooth strands of hair, to add a soft gleam to catchlights in the eye and to add a natural feathery effect to the ends of the hair – just use with caution!



**Burn:** Used with a light touch, the Burn brush is fantastic for blocking in shadows at the beginning of your painting and for refining areas of darkness afterwards. It's great for adding depth to hair, eyebrows and eyelashes as well as soft shade to skin and definition to lips.





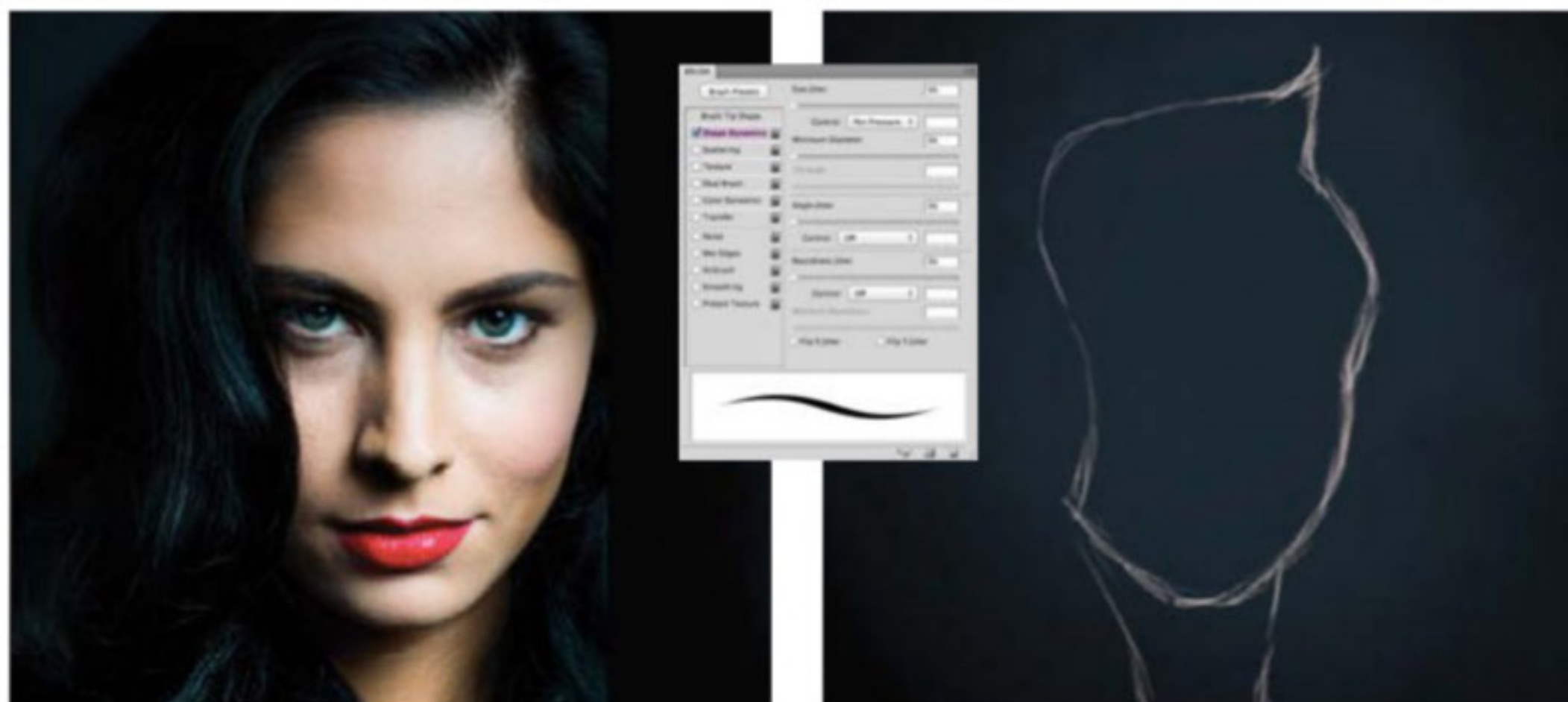
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MASTER PORTRAIT PAINTING WITH THIS ESSENTIAL ADVICE ON THE BRUSHES YOU NEED FOR PAINTING SKIN, HAIR AND EYES

## SKETCH IN THE BASIC OUTLINE

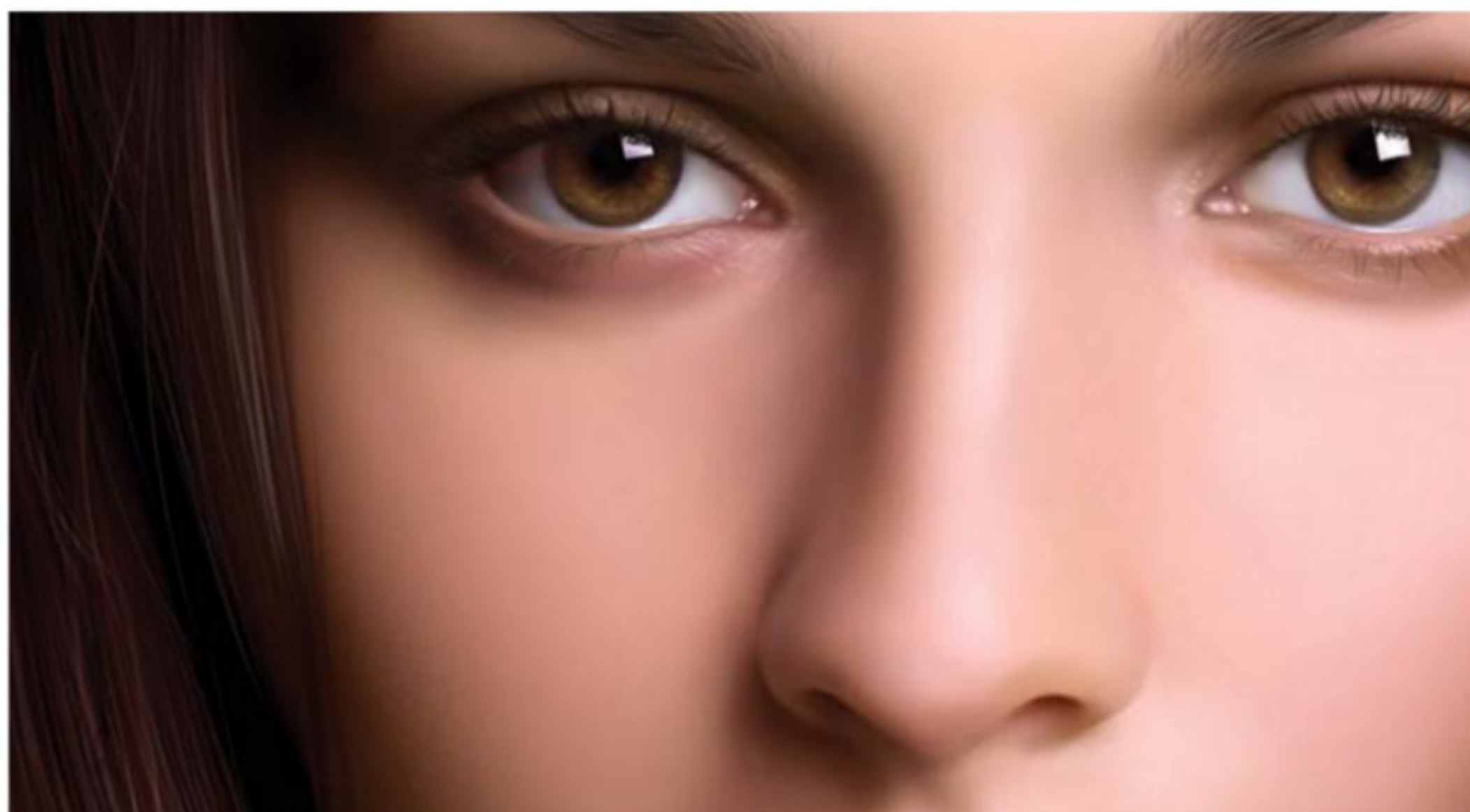
Open the Brush panel. Start by changing your brush to a basic brush with a hard edge at 100% Opacity, then turn on Shape Dynamics and ensure the Minimum Diameter is set to 0% and the Control is set to Pen Pressure. Then start sketching the outline of the subject's face, and finish off by colour blocking it in very roughly.



## MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE BURN TOOL

The Burn tool can be very useful for adding depth to shadows, intensifying colours or creating new colours to add to your palette. The Range can be adjusted for Highlights, Midtones and Shadows, each becoming darker and more saturated respectively while staying in the desired hue. This is extremely helpful if you are

in need of some richness to liven up dull and muddy colours or to add in lovely shadows, switching between ranges to find the most suitable saturation. For extra help choosing shadow colours, just make a mark on your desired shadow area, select the new colour and press Cmd/Ctrl+Z.



## SKETCH YOUR PORTRAIT

BASIC BRUSH TECHNIQUES FOR SKETCHING AND BLOCKING IN TONE

## 01 | CREATE THE CANVAS

Begin by starting a new document with the dimensions that you wish your final image to have.



For maximum detail, try to work on as large a canvas as you can without slowing down the computer. In this case, the canvas is A4, so create a new layer and prepare to sketch out the portrait.

## 02 | START SKETCHING

Using a hard round brush, begin to rough out the basic outline. We're going for intense eye contact, so make the brows strong and downward, with the eyes less open. The sketch will be the guideline for the painting process, so take some time to perfect the expression and gesture you want.



## 03 | WORK IN GREYSCALE

Now that we have a guideline, begin building up the form of the character in greyscale. Begin by setting the sketch layer's mode to Multiply, then lock this layer to prevent yourself from unknowingly painting on it. Next, create a new layer underneath the sketch and fill it with a medium grey.



## 04 | BUILD THE FORM

On a new layer below the sketch, apply shadows and highlights according to the direction of your chosen light source. Using a dark and a light-grey, loosely block in areas that define the form of the character with a hard round brush.



## 05 | BLEND THE TONES

Before moving on, take some time to blend the tones together. Merge all layers underneath the sketch and select a hard round Smudge brush with Spacing at 165%, with Scattering checked. The Smudge strength is set around 50%. Gently go over rough areas with this brush to smooth things out. Use this blending method throughout the process.





## COMPOSE A SKIN COLOUR

LEARN HOW TO CHOOSE COLOURS FOR CHARACTER PAINTING

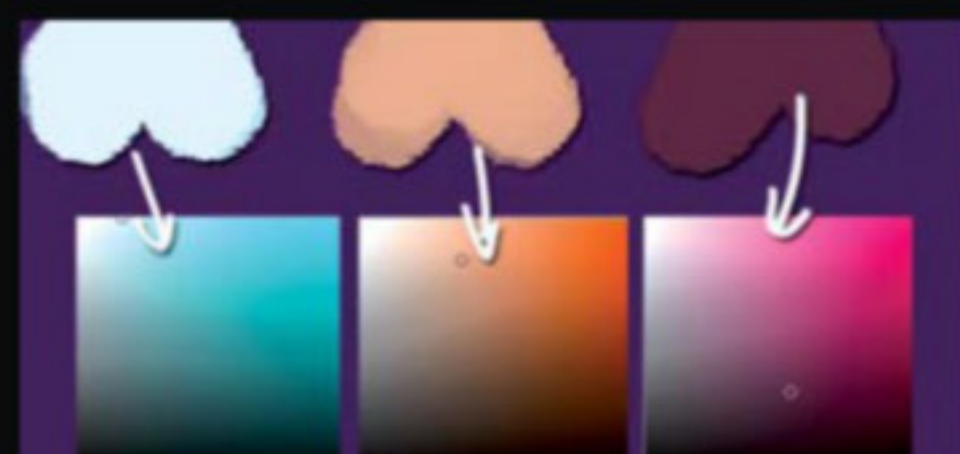
### 01 CHOOSE A MIDTONE

Choosing a midtone will depend on the light source you plan. For standard scenes, it's safest to go with a typical beige.



### 02 HIGHLIGHTS AND SHADOWS

When picking highlights and shadows, remember that their hue should differ from the hue of your midtone.



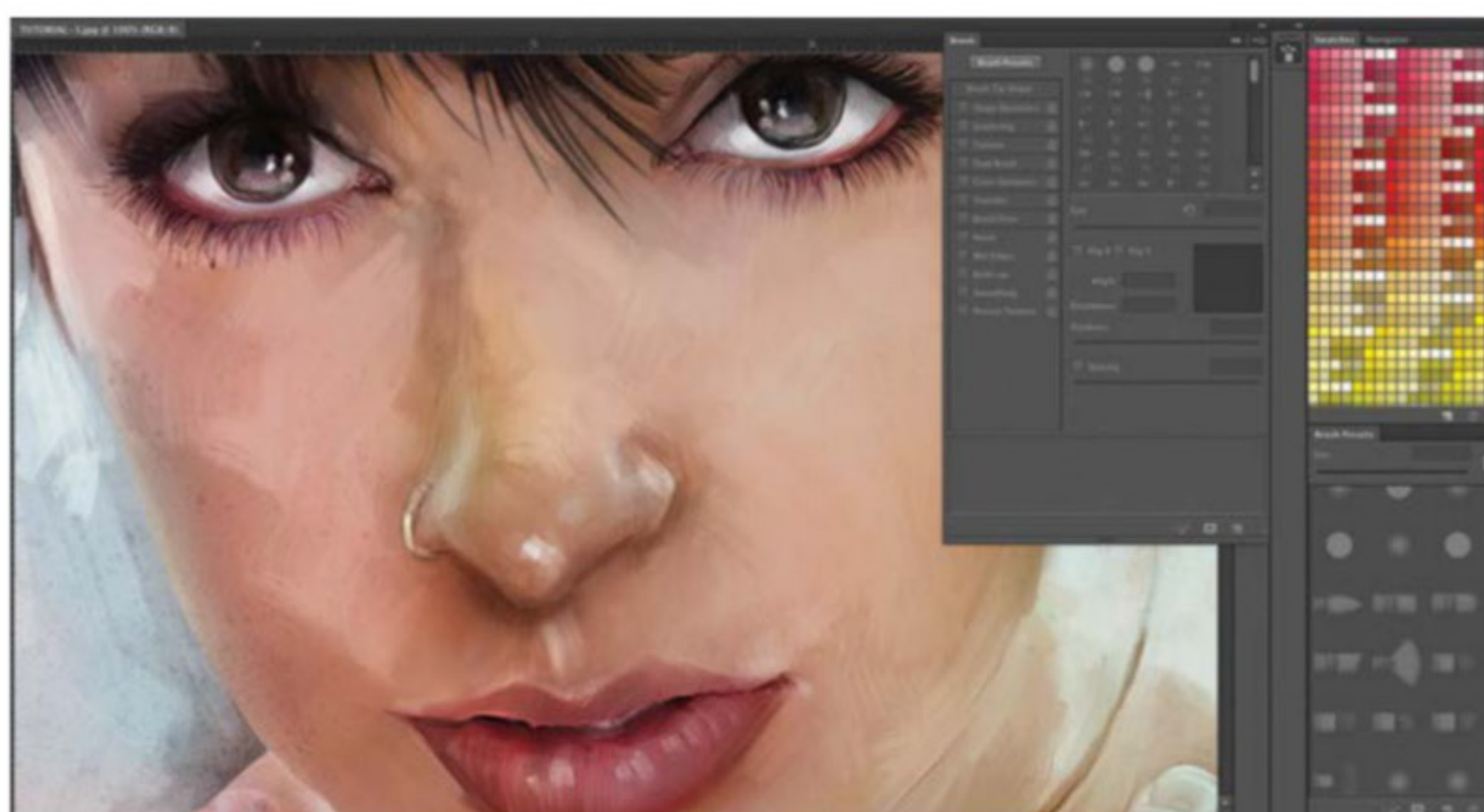
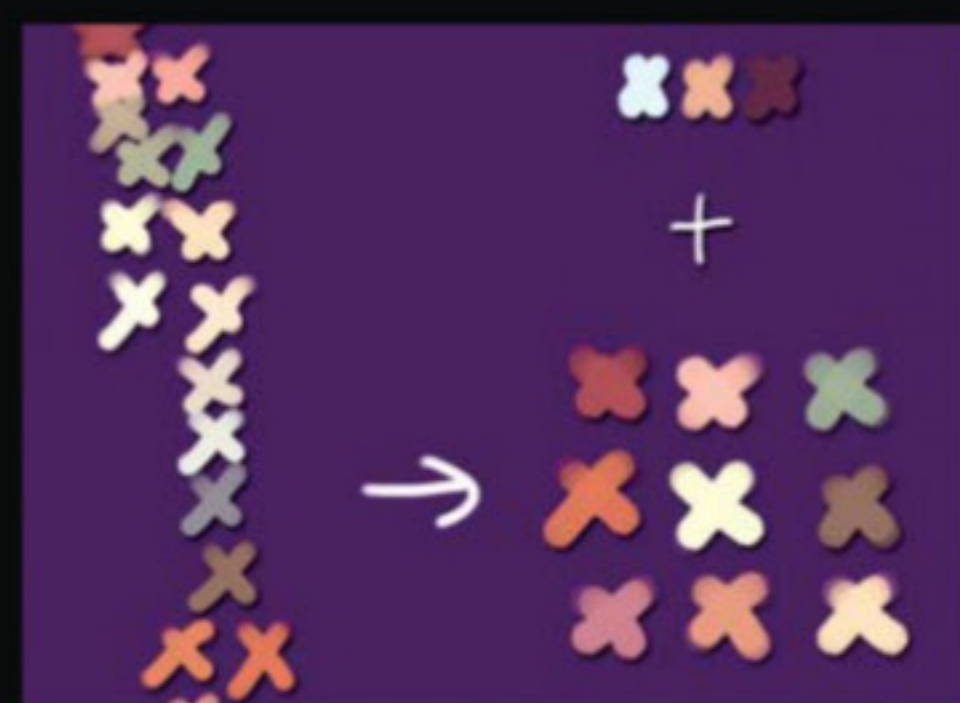
### 03 ENRICH YOUR PALETTE

After you have chosen the highlight and shadow colours, eye drop them. With those colours selected, apply some strokes on top.



### 04 FINALISE COLOUR CHOICES

Review all the colours you created and choose the boldest combinations that strongly differ from each other.



## SELECT THE RIGHT COLOUR HUES

The human body features a lot of different hues, particularly the face with rosy cheeks on females and grey or almost green jaws on males because of stubble. The best way to learn the hues of the human body is of course to make studies. If you paint

everything with the same hue and saturation it will look boring, as some hues are due to ambient and reflected light, which can really open up your work. For example, shoulders and surfaces pointing up can get a blue hue because of the sky reflecting down on them.

## CREATE COLOUR HARMONY

Shadows are quite flat and generally less saturated than any highlighted side, so it's here you'll notice ambient light in the shadows. These generally should get blurry over distance, so make sure you

keep this in mind throughout the image. By highlighting colours from the Curves Display option you can modify the tones you want, but you're still working on RGB to continue applying the filters.



## CHOOSE YOUR BRUSHES

Deciding on the brushes is a crucial step for skin painting, as each of the brushes performs best at various tasks.





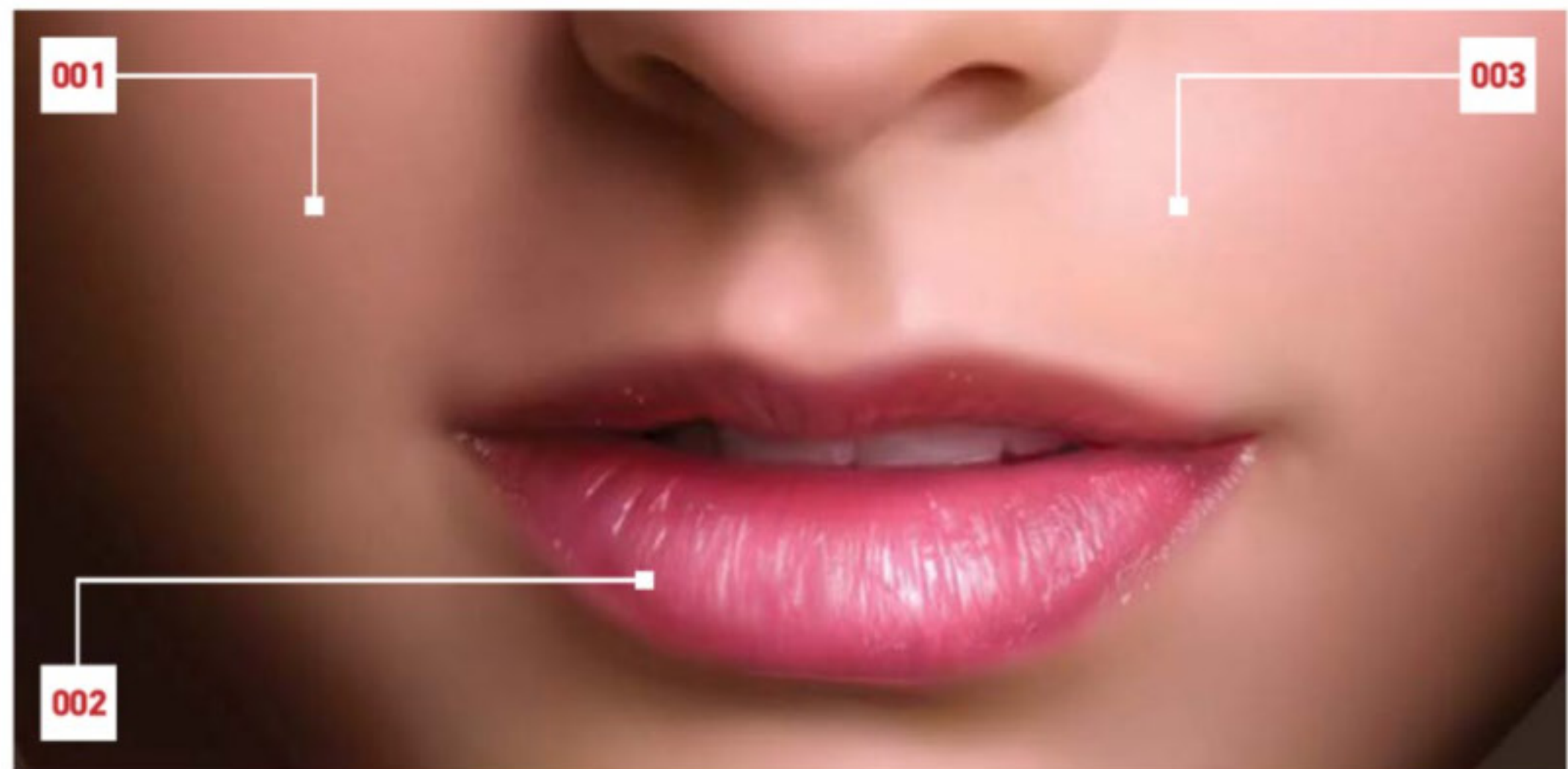
## FOCUS ON THE LIPS

Using the airbrush, begin fleshing out the detail for the lips, then add creases with the Burn tool. Use a few strokes of the Dodge tool to achieve the reflective quality on the upper lip. On a new layer, add the bright highlights of the lower lip, painting and erasing, then press Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge it with the skin layer.

**001** | Using the sketch as a guide, brush a midtone on each element's corresponding layer and then lock that layer's transparency

**002** | Add in detail, using the grid if needed to appropriately position or adjust landmarks, colour and value changes

**003** | Apply various colours to the skin using an airbrush. Attempt to match the colours of the reference image as accurately as possible if you're using one

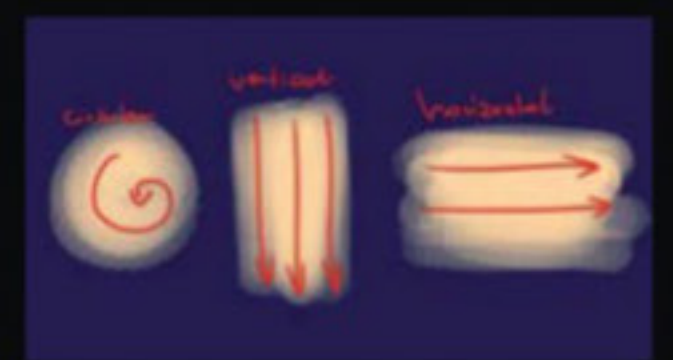


## MAKE THE SKIN GLOW

Once the painting is finished, flatten it and make a duplicate layer. Set it to Screen and apply a Gaussian Blur set around 20 to create a glow. Lower the Opacity to keep it subtle. Duplicate the Screen layer and set it to Overlay to deepen the colours. This also helps tie everything together.

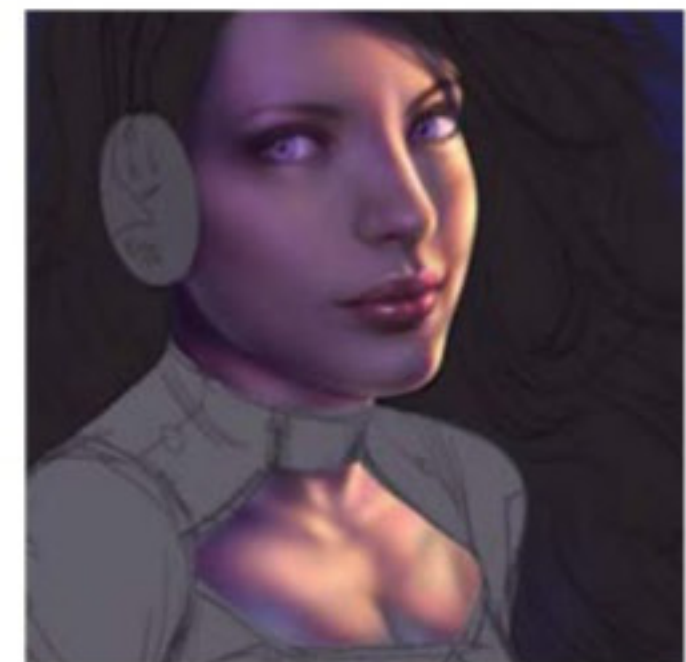
## DIFFERENT STROKES

The direction of your strokes is nearly as important as the brush you choose to paint them with. Knowing how to place and angle your strokes is yet another means of conveying realism when painting skin.



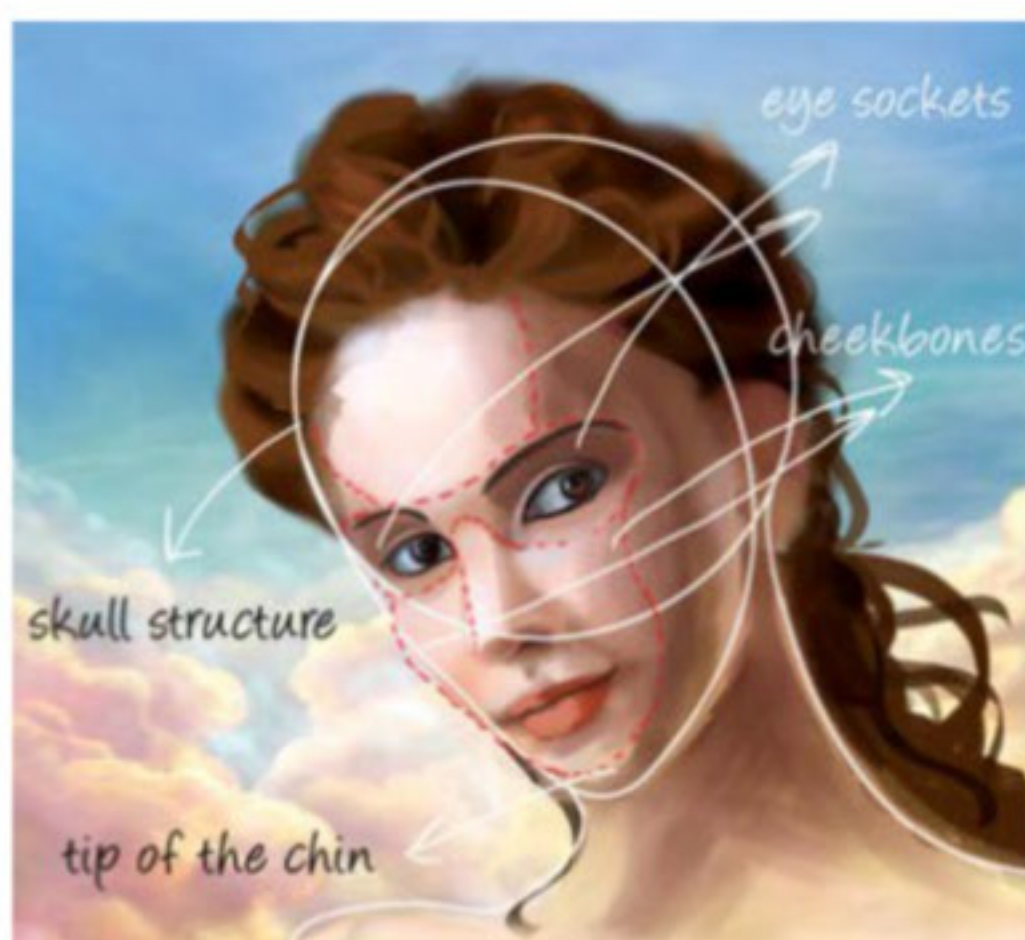
## TEXTURE UP THE SKIN

For added realism add tiny imperfections to the skin. For this, we created a custom brush composed of tiny random dots. Depending on the colour and brush size used, these dots could be anything from moles or freckles to skin pores. After covering the skin, make a selection of the most focused areas and use Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask only enough to make the imperfections just stand out.



## FACIAL ANATOMY

Bear in mind the way the human skull is formed – this will determine where to shade and how to contour the shapes the right way. Eye sockets will have deeper shadows as they are set more deeply, and nose, cheeks and chin will be exposed more, so hues will be lighter.



## VEINS

Painting in the veins is great as an extra touch for character paintings. You should start with some airbrush strokes simulating vein shapes.



## NATURALISM

The more convex the vein, the more dramatic your character will look. The most natural parts to add them to are tops of hands, but veins also look effective when painted on foreheads, arms and legs.

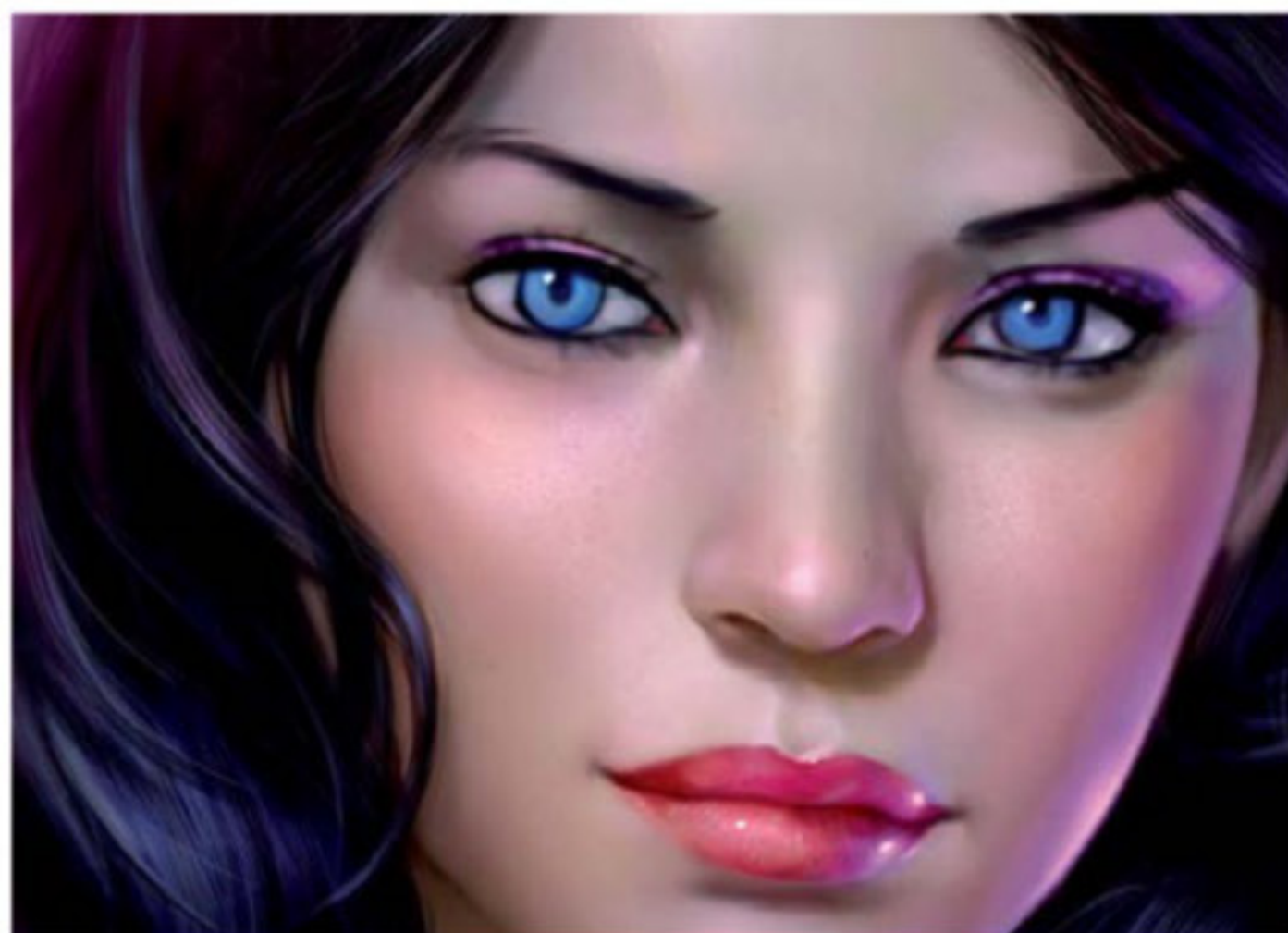




## ► PAINTED PEEPERS

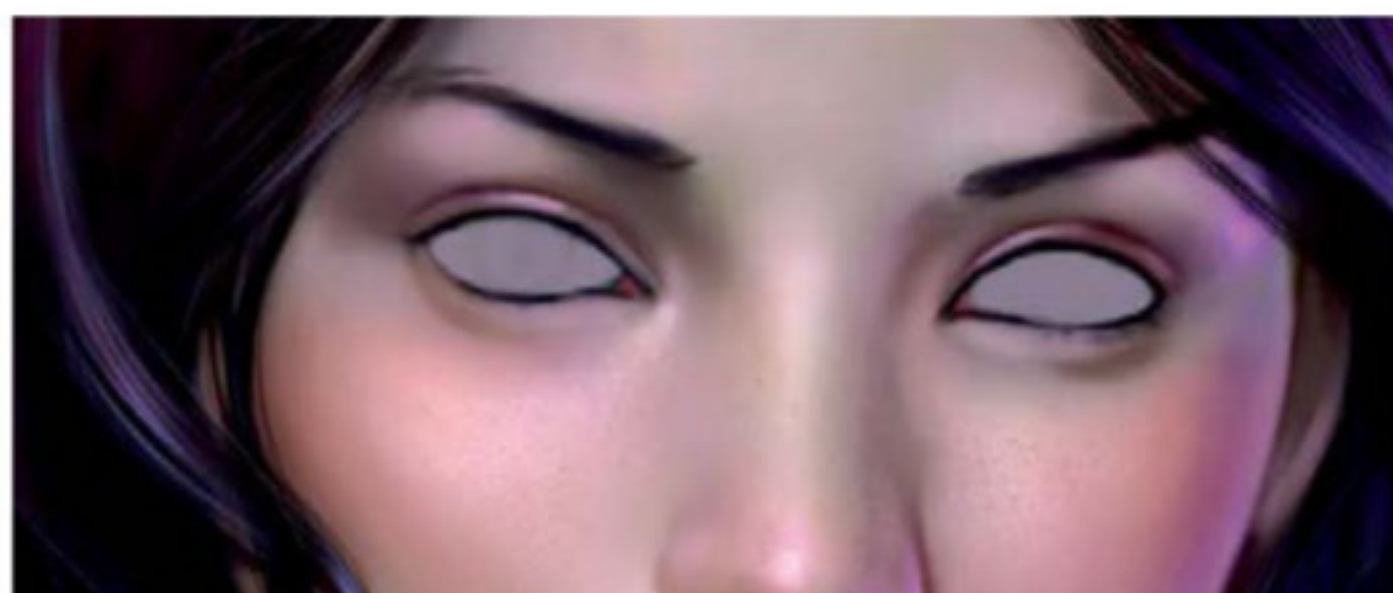
### 01 | SHAPE THE LOWER LID

The eyeball itself is rounded and fits into the bony orbits of the skull, surrounded by muscle, fatty tissue and skin areas. The differences in combinations of these elements give our eyes different shapes. In order to paint the eyeball, we must first have a place for it to go. Start by adding a small bulge, just under the eye.



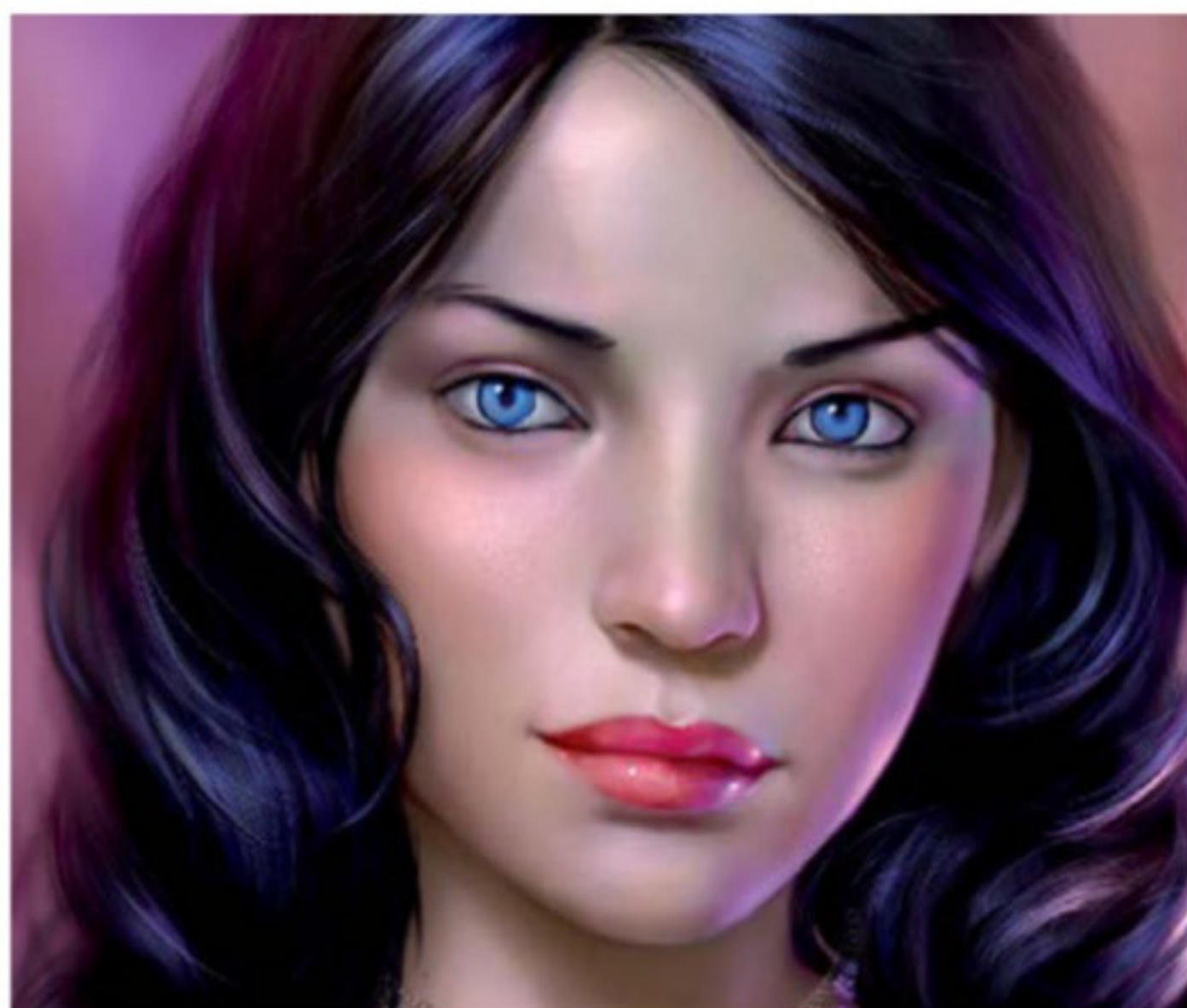
### 03 | FILL THE EYEBALL

Make a new layer and consider your colour choices for the whites of the eyes. Many factors such as age (where there could be more yellow or pink) could apply here. We've chosen a lighter, desaturated skin tone and filled the entire eyeball.



### 05 | UNCOVER THE IRIS

Lower the layer's Opacity setting to about 50% and uncheck the Lock Transparency setting. Apply the Eraser tool to the iris and pupil, so that they show through. Bring the layer's Opacity back up to 100% and merge with your character.



### 02 | DEFINE THE UPPER LID

Next, to define the upper lid, add shadows along the crease and highlights to the brow bone. Because the eyelid protrudes slightly, be sure to add highlights to the area that would capture the most light according to your source.



### 04 | MAKE THE WHITES ROUND

Lock the Transparency on this layer, select the colour you chose for the whites of the eyes, then make it lighter and less saturated. Brush the inside area of the eyeball to create a sense of roundness. Gently use the Smudge tool to smooth things out.



## REALISTIC EYES

Add in radiating streaks moving outward from the pupil, using several colours for a realistic effect. Including random dots of colour will also add some variety and uniqueness. For the lashes, use a small brush and paint each one beginning at the eyelid then curve your stroke slightly. Finish by applying small, light-coloured specks, with the brush mode set to Vivid Light, creating eye reflection. Also add this brush around the tissue and bottom eyelid.





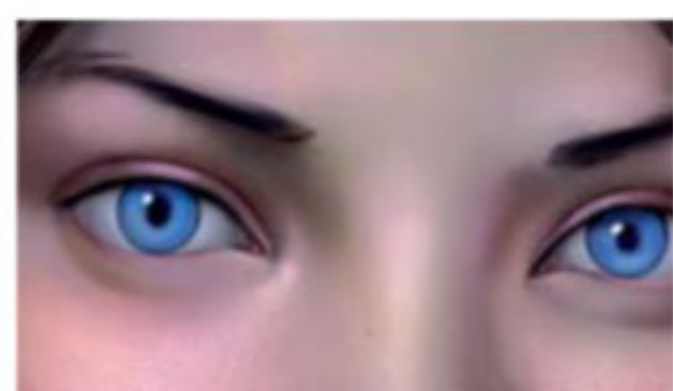
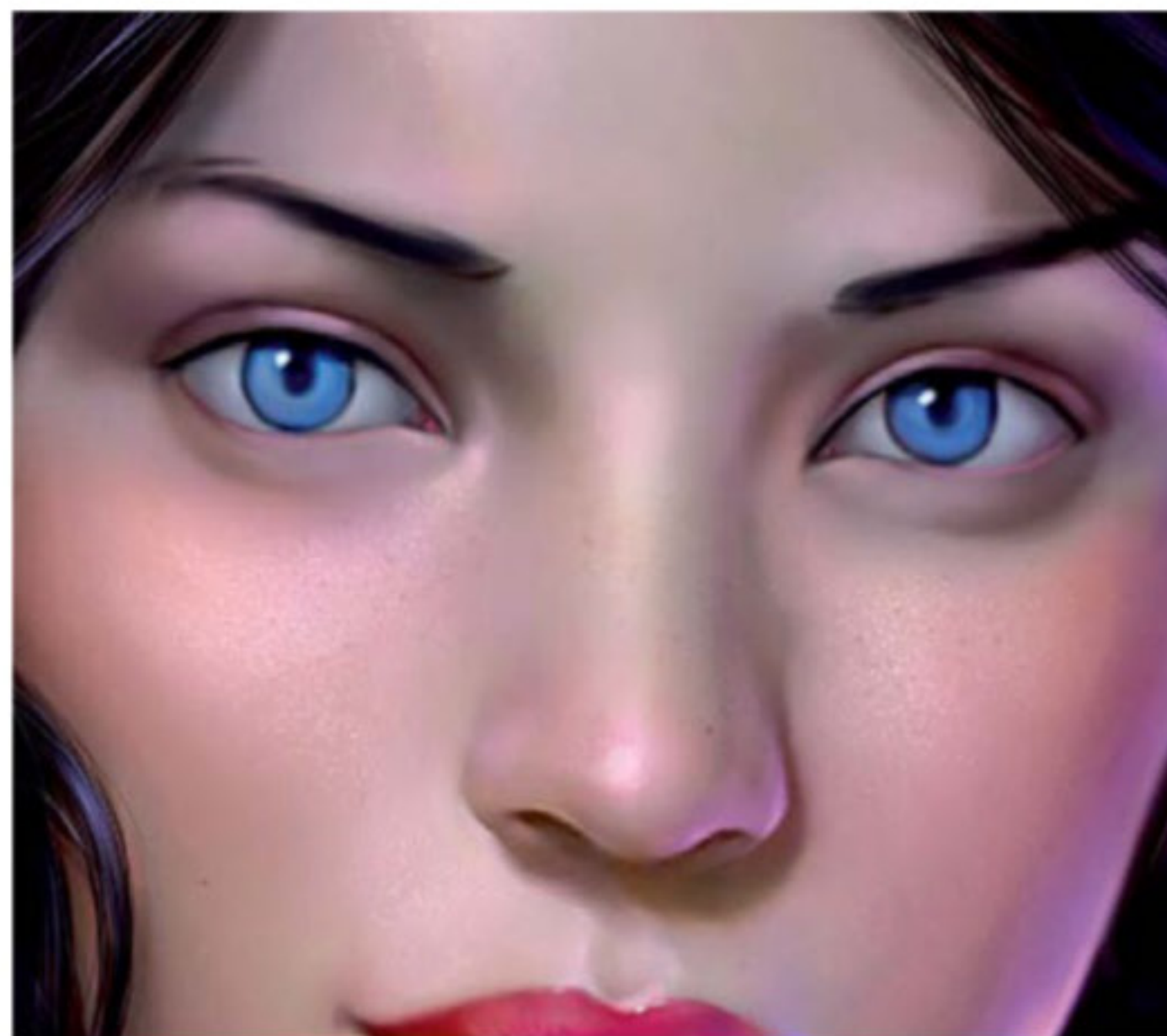
## 06 BLEND THE WHITES WELL

Use the Smudge tool around the iris to blend slightly with the whites of the eye, towards the inner-eye (around the tear duct) and any other parts of the white that appear rough. If left unblended, the eye could appear dry and unrealistic.



## 07 ADD THICKNESS TO THE LOWER-LID

Next, choose a light pink that's similar to the skin tone and brush along the edge of the bottom lid. The thickness of the lid is obvious towards the outer-eye, but disappears as it reaches the innermost edge.

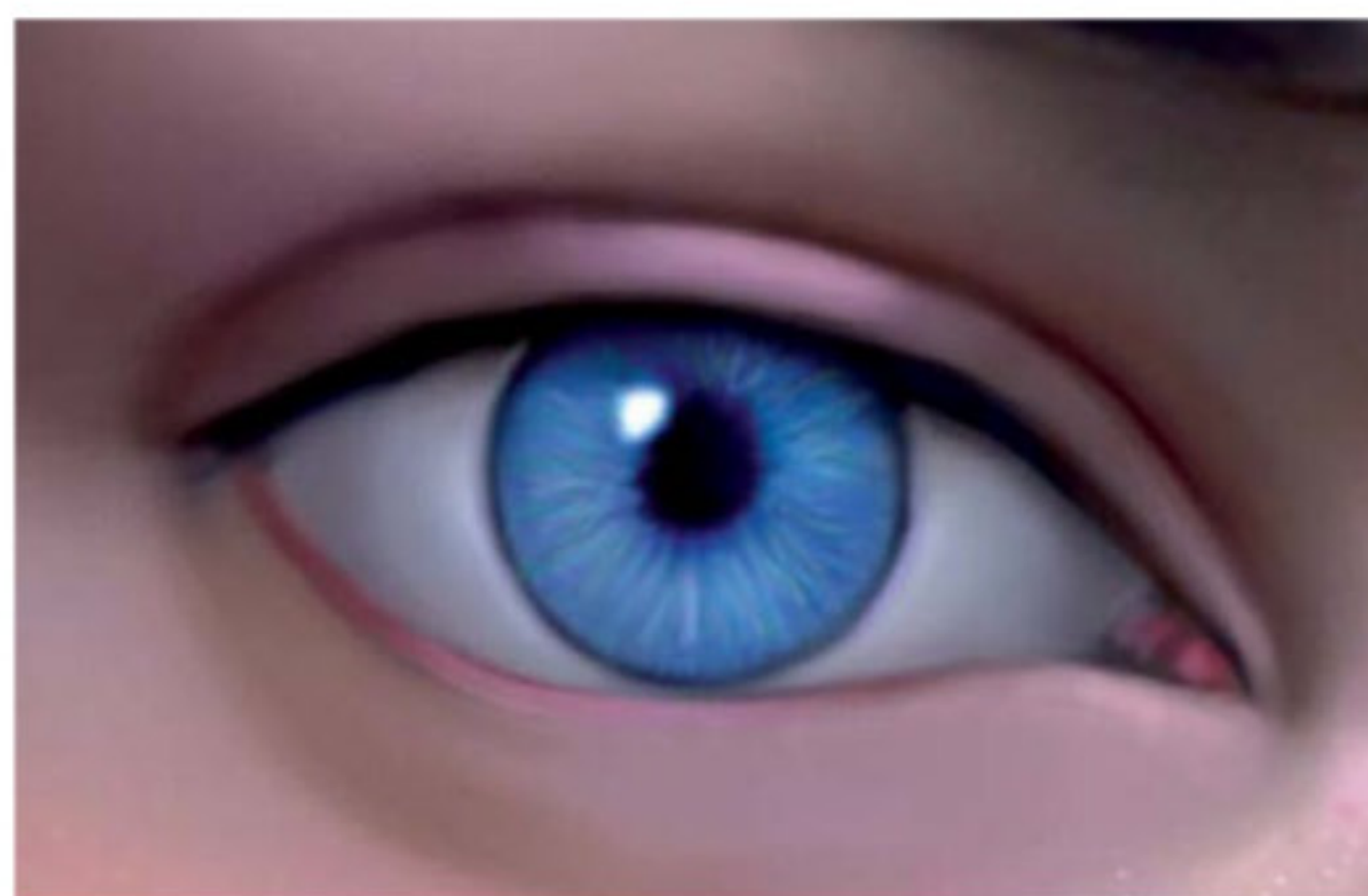


## 08 BEGIN DETAILING THE IRIS

Start by picking colour from the pupil, then radiating towards the outer edge of the iris with small strokes, fading them as they approach the edge. Do the same with the outer edge of the iris – colour-pick and make thin strokes towards the pupil.

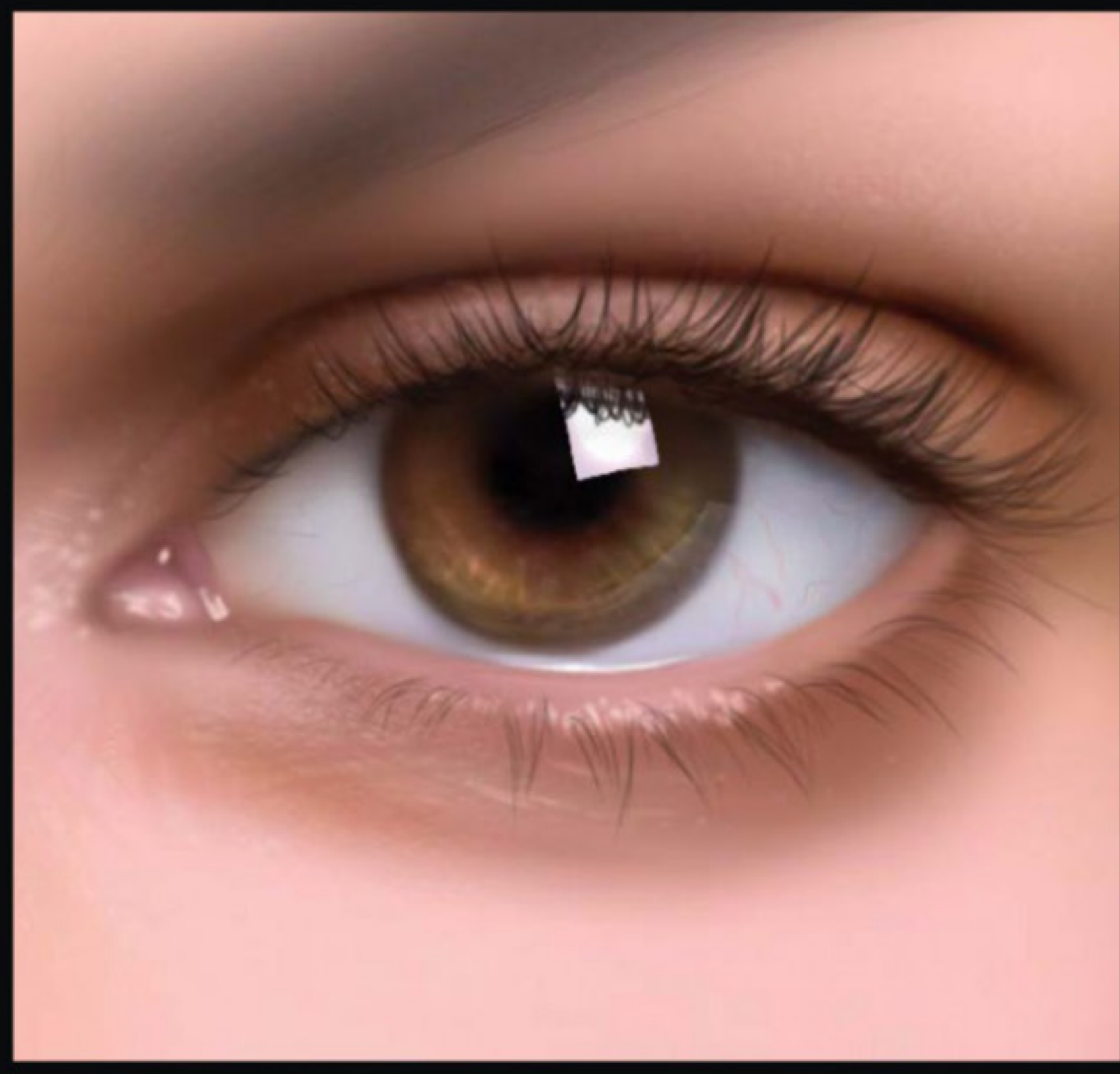
## 09 ADD COLOUR VARIATION

Colour-pick the iris colour then, using the sliders in the Color menu, generate a slightly different tone to the original. Make radiating strokes just as before. Do this a few more times with various hues.



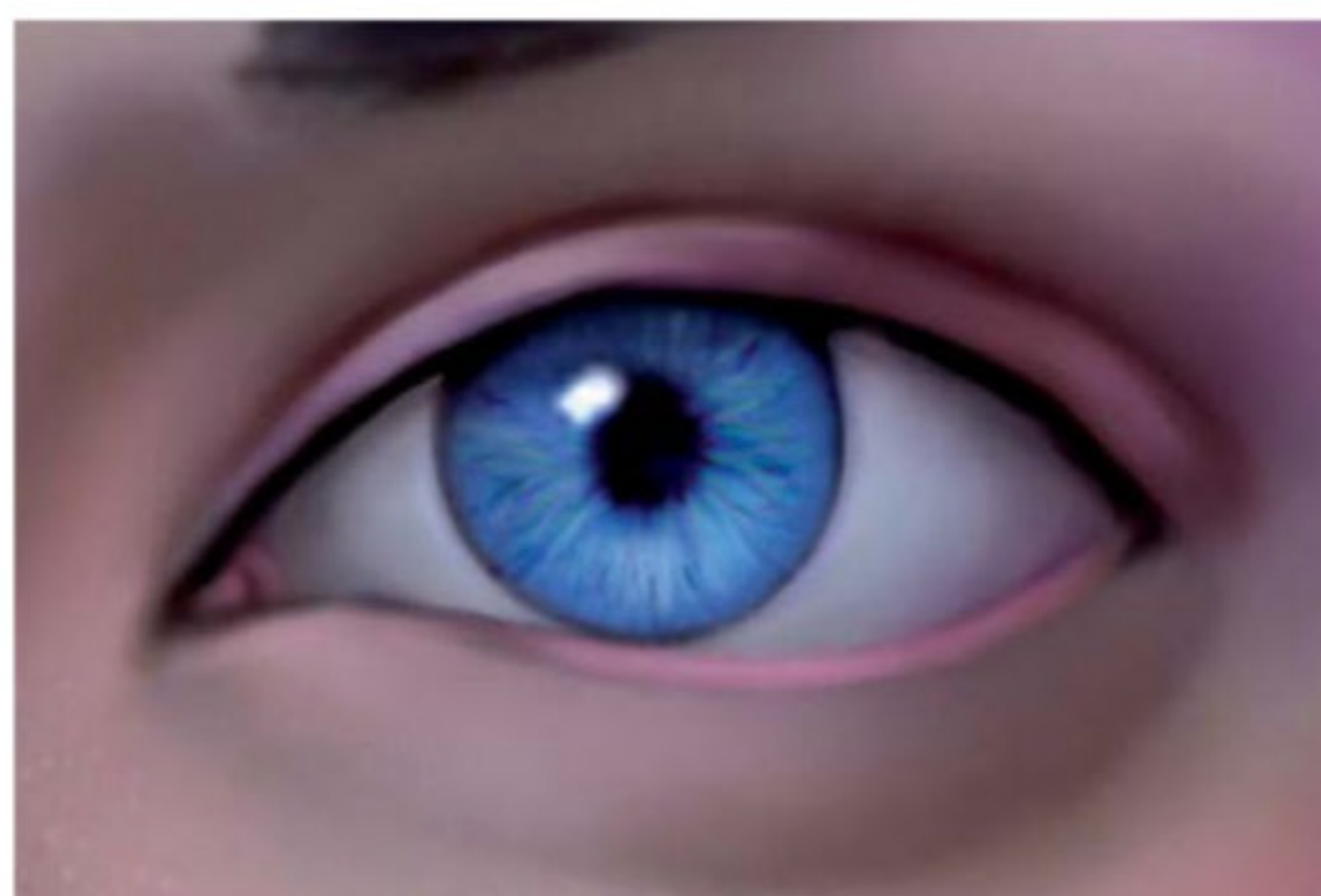
## INSERT REFLECTIONS

There are many kinds of lighting effects that occur. Reflected light is bounced from one surface to another and can be found on the chin and the lips. Specular reflections occur when an object is shiny and mirror-like, such as the eyeball. To achieve this, add a distorted square shape on a new layer and create a layer mask for it. Paint black on the mask to hide away parts that are blocking the reflection, such as lashes.



## 10 APPLY MORE BLUR

Use the Smudge tool to blur the inner and outer edges of your newly made strokes. Take a look at your own eyes in a mirror, noticing how there are spots of colour, lines and different shapes. Feel free to make squiggles and tiny dots to bring dynamism to the irises.





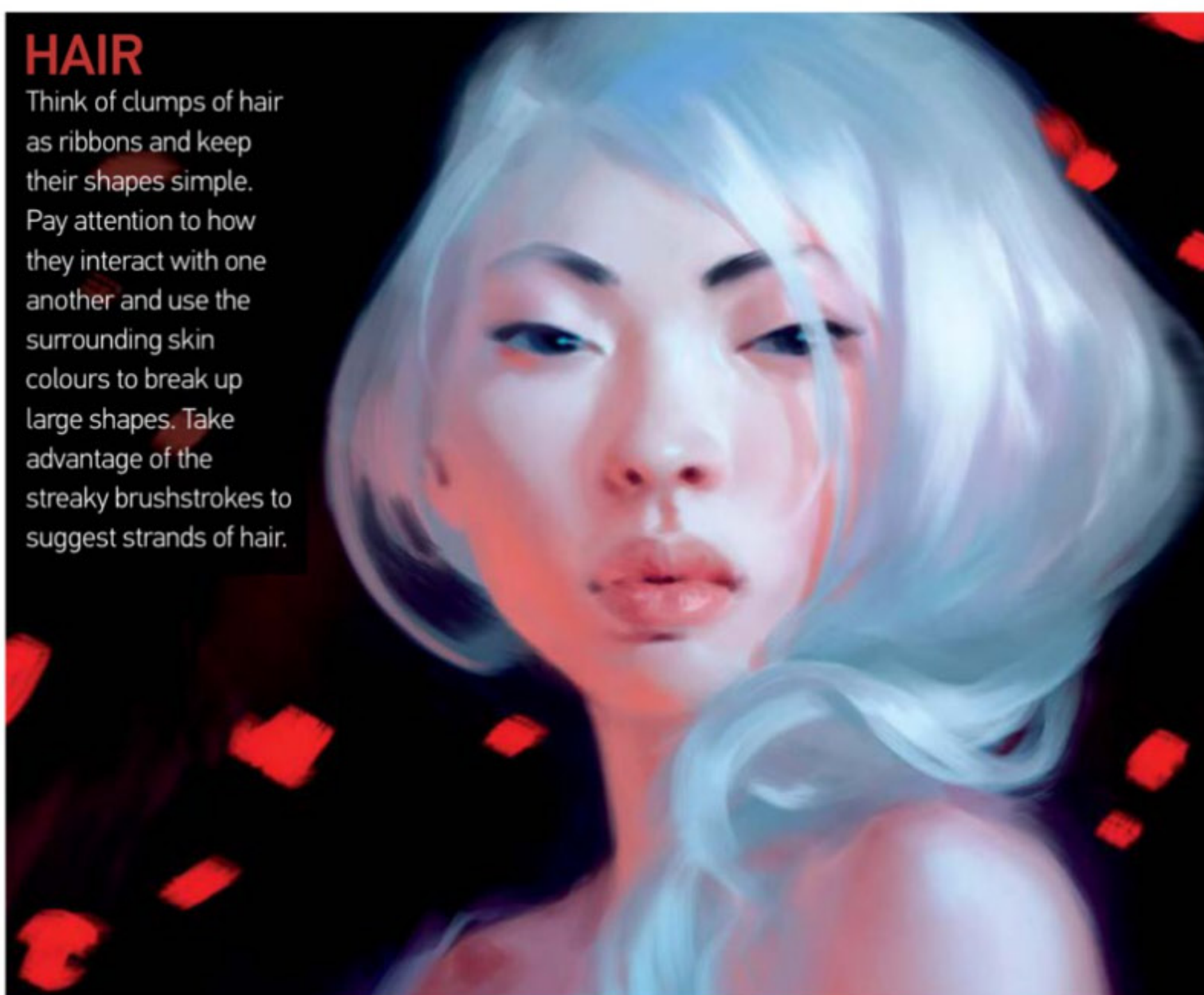
## ► FLYAWAYS

With a very small hard round brush, paint in wispy strands of hair around outside edges. Flyaways add realism, so make some small ones that fly in opposite directions. Be careful only to paint in what you want to be hair strands, and lock the layer's transparency again. You can repeat this throughout the hair-painting process – just remember to lock the transparency to avoid going over earlier work!



## HAIR

Think of clumps of hair as ribbons and keep their shapes simple. Pay attention to how they interact with one another and use the surrounding skin colours to break up large shapes. Take advantage of the streaky brushstrokes to suggest strands of hair.



## PAINT HAIR PRO STYLING TECHNIQUES

### 01 | SET UP A BASE FOR THE HAIR

With Photoshop you can paint a solid base for hair using whichever airbrush you like best. For hair it also works best to pick the darkest colour possible to begin with, and work your way through in midtones to highlights.



### 04 | DON'T PAINT EVERY HAIR BY HAND

To make it look like the hair contains more than just strands and is actually a collection of many single hairs, you can pick a hard-edged brush (doesn't matter which, because you have to set it to around 3 pixels in size) and scribble some single, bright hairs in on a new layer. Now copy and paste this layer, then flip and rotate and adjust them with the Transform tools until they fit.



### 02 | ADD HIGHLIGHTS

Create a new layer and use the Speckled brush to randomly paint in some solid strands of highlights. Don't be afraid that it might look silly – just take this opportunity to experiment.



### 05 | SHADOW COLOURS

The little hairs need some shadow colours to make them pop. Make some of them look like they are actually on top of the others to create depth. When some of the newly added hairs do not seem to match with the shape of the styling, simply push them back with the Eraser where they are supposed to look darkest.



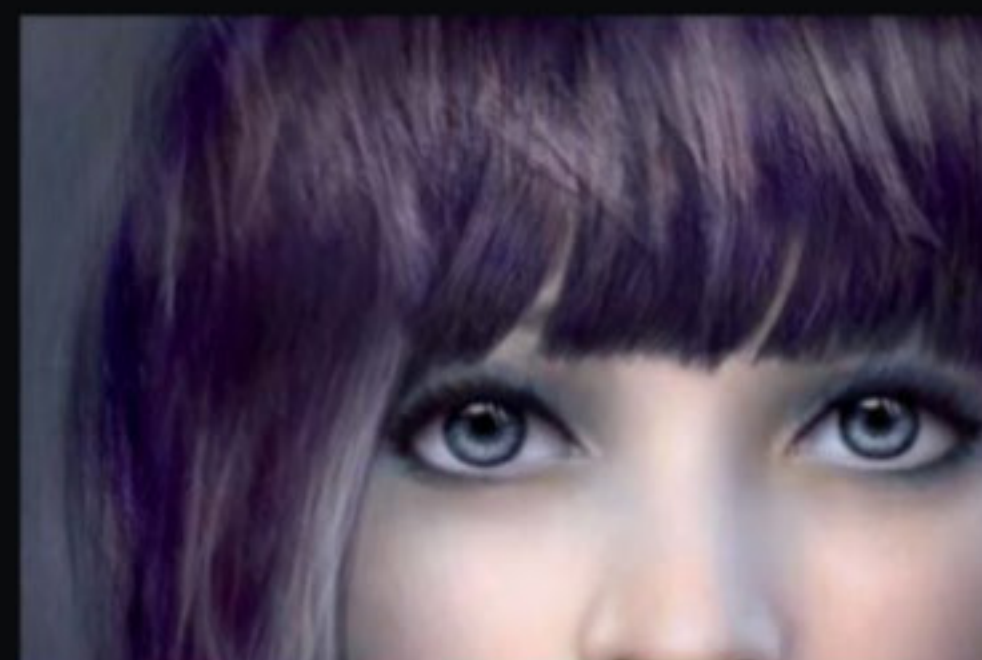
### 03 | WORK OVER THE STRANDS

Select the Eraser – it must be set to an Airbrush setting with soft edges, or this step won't work very well! The key is to carefully pull back the bright strands that you have just painted, keeping most of the new bright colour somewhere in the middle of the strand to create a highlight that will automatically suggest shape.



### 06 | LAST REFINEMENTS

For this step, all you have to do is create a new layer and paint accents on some of the single hairs that seem to be on top of the others. This highlight colour should be almost white and must be added with care to the most interesting parts of the hair style.





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# SECRETS OF BRANDING

IN TODAY'S INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE MARKET, CREATING A SUCCESSFUL BRAND IS EASIER SAID THAN DONE. WE SPEAK TO THE BEST CREATIVE MINDS TO GET THEIR INSIGHT ON HOW TO MAKE A BRAND INDISPENSABLE

Every day, from the moment we wake up, we are faced with hundreds of brands to choose from. Whether it is the shampoo or deodorant you pick in the morning, to your choice of restaurant at lunch or dinner, branding is everywhere. As a company, building and sustaining the right branding has never been so important, and the addition of having to appeal to a global market makes matters much more complex. Realist's

senior designer Galin Kastelov emphasises this important message: "Branding happens to be the medium that helps you spread your personality and reputation to a much broader audience."

**“** If you make your brand meaningful, you'll be unique, compelling and relevant. If you are undifferentiated, you will struggle to exist in an overly crowded market **”**  
Paul Taylor, [www.brandopus.com](http://www.brandopus.com)

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As CEO of Elevendy, Cox's passion is "building friendships with clients and driving work that blows their minds."

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Taylor is a founding partner and executive creative director at an award-winning strategic design agency.

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As a self-confessed typography geek, Bloom provides unique design solutions that add value to brands.

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After starting out designing greetings cards in his bedroom, Kastelov is now a successful senior designer at Realist, a branding agency.

LIMBERT FABIAN  
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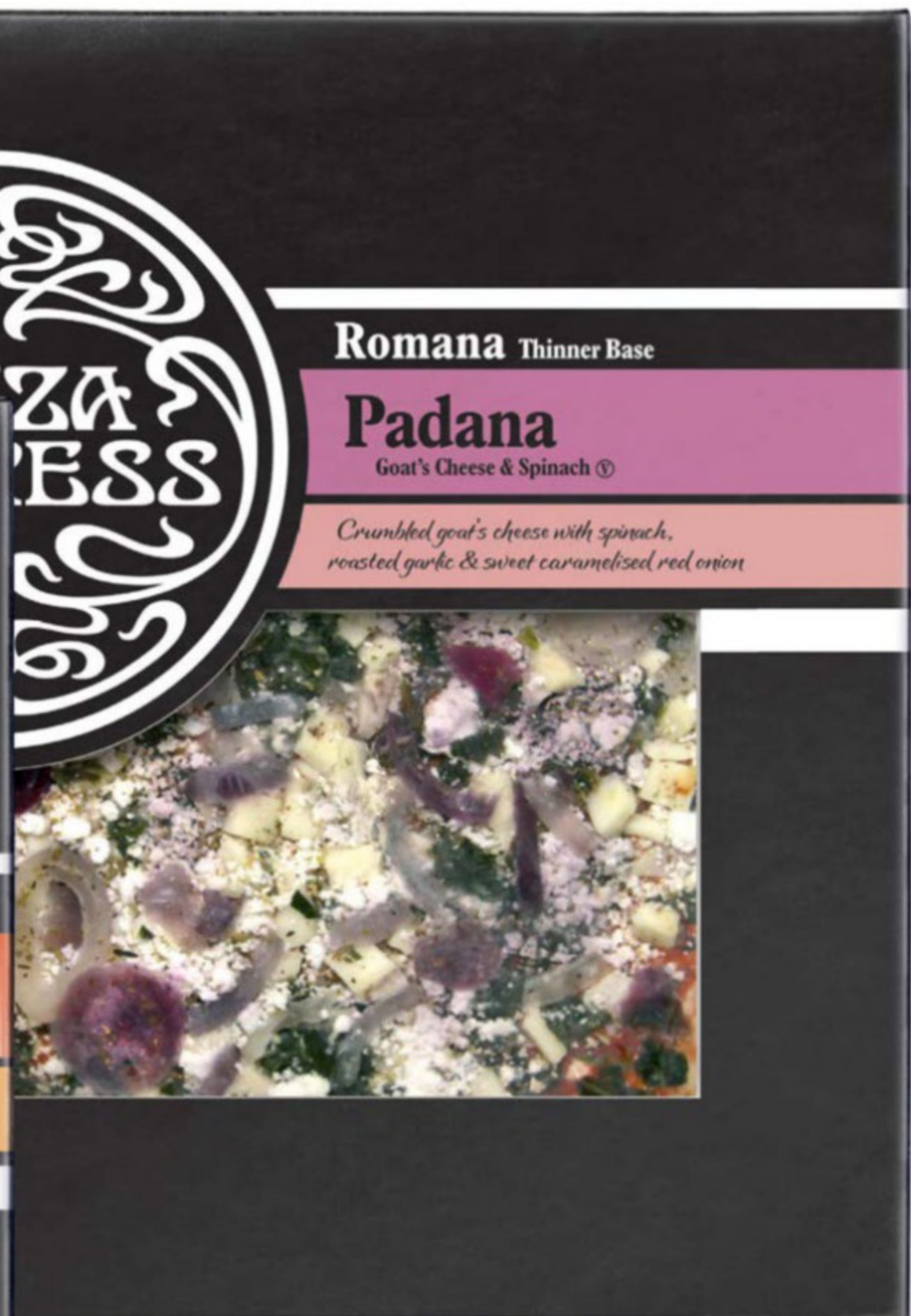
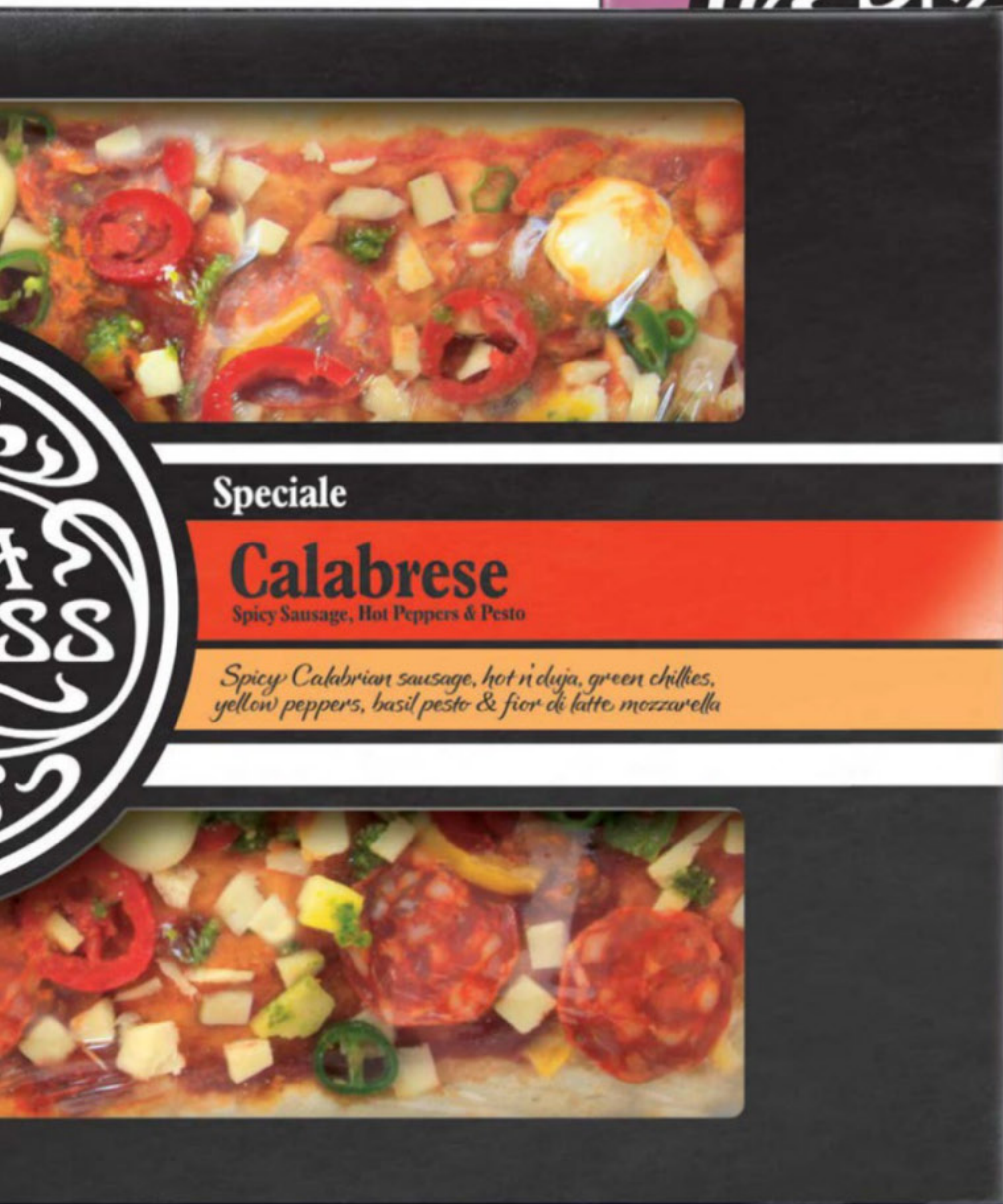


Having worked in animation, Fabian leads a team specialising in brand design projects, using animation as the main tool.



**LEFT: The One Series Bottles:** The strategy behind the One Series packaging was to bring common, everyday wine talk and translate it into effective hand-painted wine labels. The result was a distinctive mix of humour and punchiness targeted at the upscale clientele of the Easy Choice Winery.

**Pizza Express packaging:** We developed the design with the client's input to create a consistent graphic scheme across pack. Two tones of colour were used to signify the variants on each item and an integrated window allowed consumers to see the product.



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Creating a new, vibrant brand is a challenge that requires a sophisticated strategy. It is not just about a product and a name; it is about design. So, what do designers have to think about when creating appealing visuals? "Producing something that

customers can relate to is a very important step in the right direction." Kastelov adds. "In a highly cluttered marketplace, we strive to create brands that not only make a visual statement, but also solve a problem for their consumers." To succeed, companies must connect to their customers by understanding their needs and then integrating brand strategies to target them at every point of public contact.

But what about the brand itself? Creative director of Moonbot, Limbert Fabian, believes that becoming a go-to brand starts at the very heart of the company. If you are just starting out, "know who you want to be as a company and what you stand for. If you don't have a clear vision of that, you'll never be

able to communicate it to a customer visually." Executive creative director of BrandOpus, Paul Taylor, adds: "If you make your brand meaningful, you'll be unique, compelling and relevant. If you are undifferentiated, you will struggle to exist in an overly crowded market."

With those prerequisites to think of, how do you go about creating an eye-catching logo in Photoshop? Is typography that important? What areas should you concentrate on when creating visuals? We at **Advanced Photoshop** look into answering these questions and more, offering top tips from some of the finest creative agencies to help you understand what, in design terms, makes a successful brand.

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Nysted is a retoucher at Taylor James, providing CGI, animation, live-action, photography, retouching and post-production.



## ► THE IMPORTANCE OF LOGOS AND TYPOGRAPHY

A successful brand is made up of many components, but with today's average consumer making choices using their eyes, creating a visually appealing logo for your brand is integral. The design should complement every aspect of the business in order to attract customers. Paul Taylor recognises this. He believes that it's not only about creating a logo – it is

**RM regular font:** RM Regular is a simple, clean and legible sans-serif typeface. Designed to be used as an alternative to Arial, Gotham and Helvetica, RM Regular is a great alternative for industry professionals.



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about crafting an identity. "The logo might feature a word, but an identity incorporates the word to the point that it becomes symbolism. Is Coca-Cola a logotype or a symbol? Symbols are now recognised for their shape and form, rather than their legibility. And crucially, we know that consumers decode symbols faster than words."

As symbols are so important, it is essential to consider whether the symbol that you want to use is original. As CEO of Eleventy, Dave Cox is all too familiar with designers plagiarising content: "I was a judge for a pretty large advertising competition, and one of the logos that made it to final judging was almost a direct rip on the 'Beats by Dre' logo; [although] I doubt this designer intended to infringe – it was likely a new creation in their mind." Cox adds to his point by discussing the significance of copyright and trademark searches: "Even though you might believe your idea to be unique and self-grown, chances are high that someone else has come up with it before. It's amazing the way our brains can store and retrieve memories without us even knowing it."

Once the search is complete and you have had your commission details through from the brand, what is next? For Mark Bloom at Mash Creative, it is all about hitting the brief head-on. "First and foremost, it should answer the brief. For example, I wouldn't approach a logo design for a men's skincare range in the same way as a range of women's handbags. This is an extreme example, but [it] proves to illustrate the importance of knowing the target audience. Successful logos will often communicate the essence and values of a particular company."

As another component to your brand, the typography you choose can drastically transform

## TYPOGRAPHY TIPS FROM THE PROS

BRANDOPUS IMAGE CREATION DIRECTOR, SCOTT KIMBLE, HAS BEEN USING PHOTOSHOP FOR OVER 20 YEARS, AND SHARES HIS SIMPLE HINTS AND TIPS TO SAVE YOU TIME WHEN DESIGNING TYPOGRAPHY AND LOGOS

- By holding down the Shift key and dragging a layer across onto an identical document, it will appear in exactly the same place.
- Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+T is great if you want to perform exactly the same transform again to a different layer object.
- Try using Color Range (in the Select menu) rather than the Lasso tool to make a tonal selection. In Color Range, set the Fuzziness to 40 and click on the colour you want to change. You can Shift-click or increase the Fuzziness to around 100 to increase the selection.
- If you want to re-apply exactly the same Curve or Levels to another image layer without using adjustment layers, simply press Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+M (or L for Levels) and it will reapply the last Curve or Level again.
- If you have an image that is slightly pixelated, try using Noise>Median (in the Effect menu) set at 1 or 2 pixels to take the edge off a bit.
- Masks can be easily transferred to another layer by dragging and holding Opt/Alt to copy.
- To quickly fill a layer object with a foreground colour but retain transparency values, press Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+Shift+Delete at the same time.

**Smirnoff:** "The Smirnoff campaign 'Yours For The Making' is part of a huge online and TV campaign with agency JWT New York. At Taylor James we retouched the campaign, comping together the photographic images shot by Corriette Schoenaerts."

Credits: Client | Smirnoff; Agency | JWT New York; CGI & Post | Taylor James



## THE ONE SERIES BOTTLE LABELS

REALIST CREATED A DISTINCTIVE MIX OF HUMOUR AND PUNCHINESS TARGETED AT THE UPSCALE CLIENTELE OF EASY CHOICE WINERY



**Secondary signage:** "A special set of signage logos was designed to complement the lettering on the bottles. The graphic elements were chosen to stir curiosity with its austere form."



**Catchy copy:** "We decided to get straight to the point and say things out loud. The copy was chosen to contrast with the plethora of 'me too' products on the shelves."



**Typography:** "We created a custom, hand-painted watercolour font. Then we digitised it to make it more practical and applicable for the different kind of media application and touch points."

**Bottle detail:** "Knowing that typography looks best when it is not crowded with other design elements, we preserved its front row by proposing a high-end emboss of the winery logo."

© Realist

“Even though you might believe your idea to be unique and self-grown, chances are high that someone else has come up with it before”

Dave Cox, [www.elevendy.com](http://www.elevendy.com)

your logo and even your company in the eyes of the consumer from 'just another brand' to 'a must-have product.' For Cox, it is all about relating the type style to the message that you are trying to convey.

"Imagine a construction company that has a wispy, frilly script typestyle that reads 'Titan Construction Co.' What feelings do you get? It feels disingenuous. Titan Construction would benefit from a strong and tough typeface, while the frilly, wispy script would be better suited to a sweet shop. Typography can make all the difference."

For Kastelov, typography looks best when it is not crowded with other design elements. He also thinks that "typography has an instant effect on our subconscious mind, since our brain first recognises the shape and style of the letters. Only afterwards do we get to comprehend the meaning behind the words. This allows us to establish certain perceptions for our products/services by using subtle cultural cues."

Bloom agrees: "Even the smallest details will have an impact on the design, from the typeface used to the leading and kerning of a font." So, how do you turn good typography into a successful brand message? He adds: "Like most things in life, practice makes perfect. This is certainly true when designing."



**Moonbot Studios' kids' shirts:** "When we decided to create kids' shirts featuring the Moonbot logo, we wanted to create something fun and special just for little ones. The artist, Joe Bluhm, used a series of textures and brushes to make the print visually interesting."

© Moonbot Studios



## BUILDING THE BRAND

Building a brand's reputation online can be tricky. You've set up your company and have quite a following, but with the addition of social media, blogging and online advertising opportunities, it has never been more important to communicate your message in a clear and concise manner. It is not just about good packaging anymore; influential bloggers can do more harm than good if they do not like your latest viral ad or identity change. As stated before, consistency is key if you want your brand to stand out from the crowd.

Websites should be your first point-of-call. There are plenty of sites now available using content management software, but design is just as important to the consumer as usability. "If you have two websites, both of which sell identical products at identical prices – one site has been well designed, the other badly – which one would you buy from?" Bloom maintains: "The answer is most probably (and hopefully) the well-designed site. The reason for this is that good design and a strong brand instills confidence and trust... people aren't just buying a product, they are actually buying into the brand."

Photoshop is a great package for designing pixel-perfect websites. With many designers



**Moneycorp redesign:** BrandOpus was challenged by Moneycorp to completely reinvent its retail presence. The tender-winning design aims to make best use of space, exchanging the retail kiosk, traditional to bureaux de change, for an open-plan brand environment, centred on the theme of 'no barriers'.

supplying PSDs to web developers to build from, creating a seamless experience for customers means that you must "identify the purpose of the site and then design in such a way that the buttons, interface, tabs and layout feel like a familiar place to the user. Frustrate them in any way or let design get in the way and you've lost them," Cox adds. Kastelov acknowledges this: "I use Photoshop as the go-to place, when I need to create seamless artwork. Adding a real-life dimension to your work is easier in Photoshop than in any other program. You will probably see me using Smart Objects, brushes,

Dodge and Burn, layering with textures, duotones and blending options."

Good design should not stop there; by personalising your brand to each individual, you can expect the consumer to interact with you. Similar to website design, Kastelov believes that the biggest concern with design for apps/online/mobile devices is usability and interaction. "Emerging innovations usually put a premium on the technical side of things, instead of real human needs. We feel that there is an unmet demand for user experience that delivers flawless interaction."

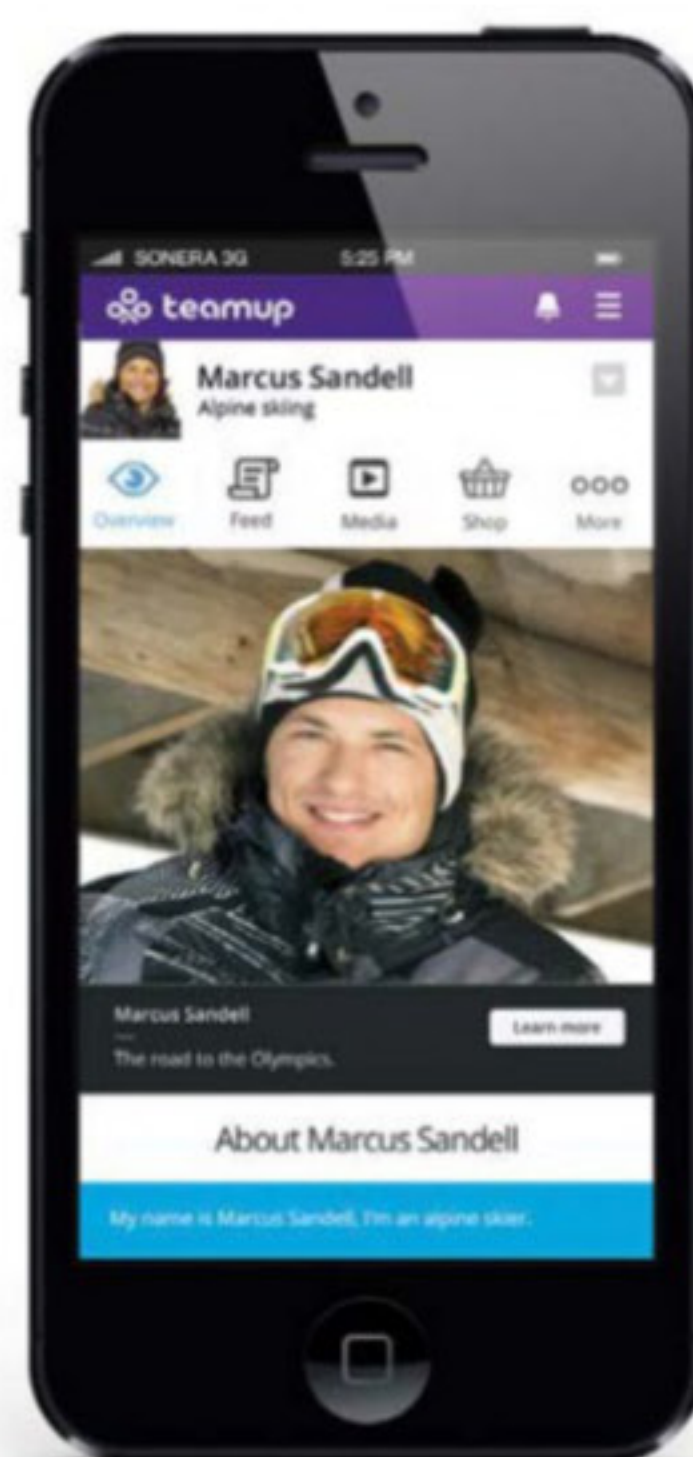
## DESIGN AND PACKAGING

MARK BLOOM DISCUSSES HOW HE CREATED INSTANTLY RECOGNISABLE PACKAGING FOR UBEAR

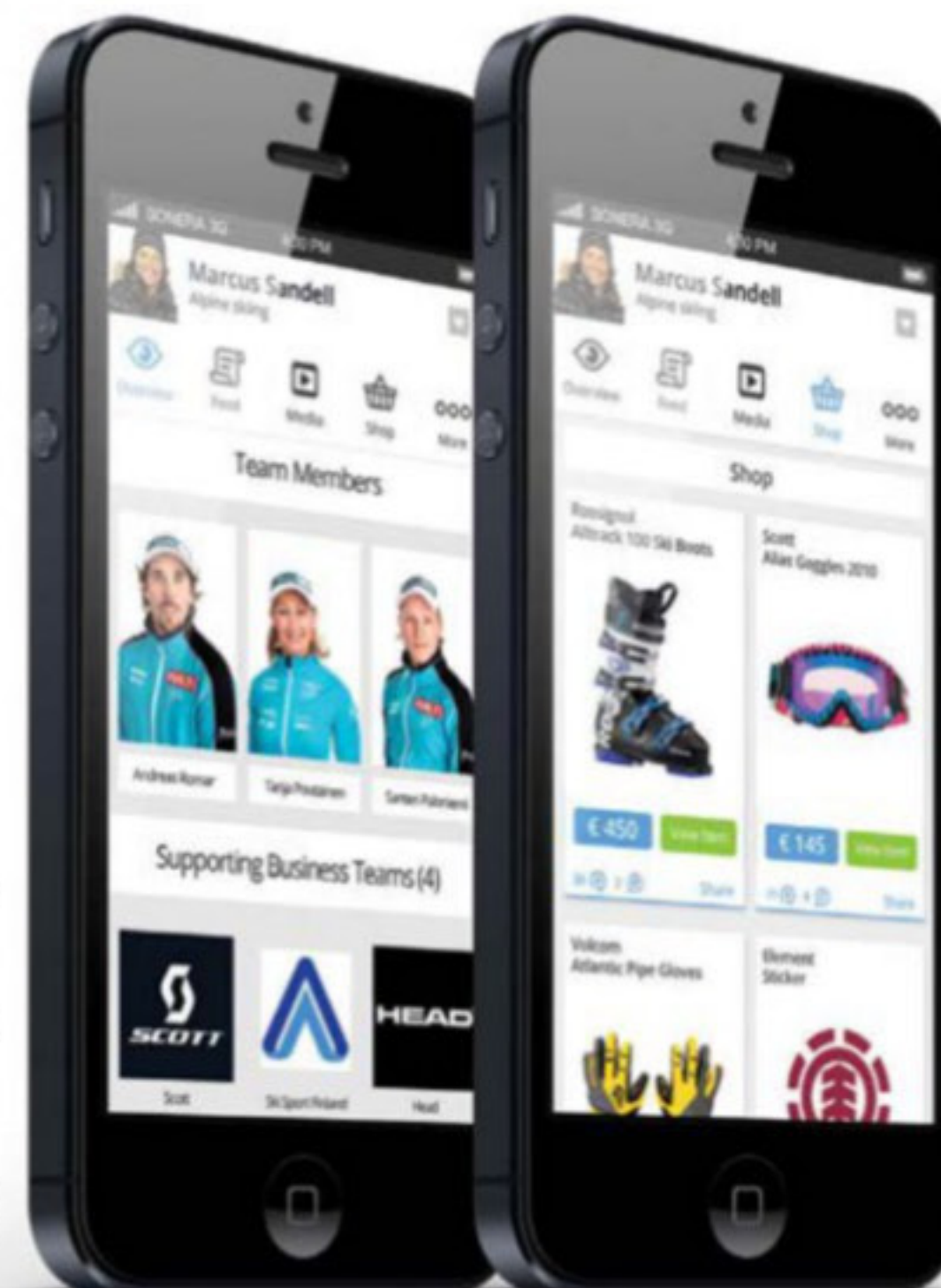
I collaborated with Paul from Hype Type Studio to design the brand identity, print collateral, packaging and website for uBear – a high-end mobile phone, tablet and laptop accessories company based in Los Angeles, California. "Our brief for the uBear logo was to create an identity that would be both adaptable and instantly recognisable. The logo consists of a standalone Bear marque hugging the letter U, as well as a custom sans-serif logotype.

"A unique, bold and bright colour palette was used throughout the packaging to help distinguish it from similar products on the market. The use of gloss varnishes and metallic foils throughout the packaging helps to create interest on the shelf. In addition to the identity and packaging, a fully responsive website was designed and built to allow a seamless user experience."

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**TeamUp Mobile Version:** "Mobile versions can be challenging, especially when the project is big and rapidly expanding. From the start we knew that we had to accommodate for this future growth, thus deciding to start with mobile first and create a modular responsive design that is easily scalable."



© Realist

If you have two websites, both of which sell identical products at identical prices – one site has been well designed, the other badly – which one would you buy from? ”  
Mark Bloom, [www.mashcreative.co.uk](http://www.mashcreative.co.uk)





## PIZZA EXPRESS REDESIGN

AS AN EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL COMPANY, PIZZA EXPRESS HAS EXISTED AS A FAVOURITE AMONG DINERS FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS. HOWEVER, AS THE BRAND GREW, IT BECAME INCREASINGLY INCONSISTENT, AND SO BRANDOPUS WERE ASKED TO REDESIGN THEIR LOGO AND PACKAGING

"We refined and reinvented the iconic Pizza Express logo, creating a more cohesive relationship between the art deco filigree and type, to establish an icon for the brand. The core equity of the stripes are brought to life on pack, complemented by striking flashes of colour that reflect the ingredients of each product."



### 01 | CONCEPT

"The brief was to encapsulate the idea of stripes into the pack designs. The stripes have been a familiar brand equity for Pizza Express, as the pizzaiolos still wear striped T-shirts in the kitchens. At this stage, sketches were used to explore the different variations of the idea."

### 02 | DEVELOPMENT

"The original concept was that each pack would echo the notion of stripes in a different way, referencing the optical pop art of the Sixties. The key to this design was a bright hit of colour to signify the product variant. The overall graphics for the pack were developed in Adobe Illustrator."



### 03 | FINALISATION

"We then developed the design with the client's input to create a consistent graphic scheme across pack. Two tones of colour were used to signify the variants on each pack. An integrated window was added to allow consumers to see the product within. We then developed this across a series of different formats, such as the pasta and sauce range. The final stage was taken into Adobe Photoshop for finalisation and visualisation."



## ▶ TAKE BRAND IDENTITY FURTHER

Creating an advertising campaign for an already-established brand should be easy. As the designer, you already have your target market and a huge following, but it is your job to seduce the customer into buying that new product or service. How do you go about creating a campaign for an already-established brand?

**Frozen Yogurt Guava:** This image was created using a mix of Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop, with all colour work finalised in Photoshop



© Junaid Younas Verka

## CROSS-CONTINENTAL APPEAL

CEO OF ELEVENDY, DAVE COX TALKS US THROUGH HIS CAMPAIGN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL JELLY BELLY BRAND

Jelly Belly came to us seeking a new innovative approach to their international market. They wanted images that would convey the idea of 'real, true-to-life flavours' without the need for complicated copywriting. When strategising for international markets, the key is keeping the messaging simple for translation purposes. Through multiple proposed concepts – all of which moved Jelly Belly from its traditional 'jelly beans on white' style – we landed on a visually rich concept

that stretched the comfort zone of Jelly Belly management and was ultimately used not only internationally but in the US as well.



**Jelly Belly Lime:** We had to be very careful not to use hand poses that could be construed as offensive to some cultures, such as the 'okay' sign that can mean dubious things elsewhere.

© Elevendy Inc.

If a brand has lost its unique touch, it is your job to get it back. Taylor agrees with this statement: "Look back at the history of the brand; its origins. Has it lost something along the way? Is there something in its history that hasn't been tapped into? What is the brand's current position, and what threat do the competition pose?"

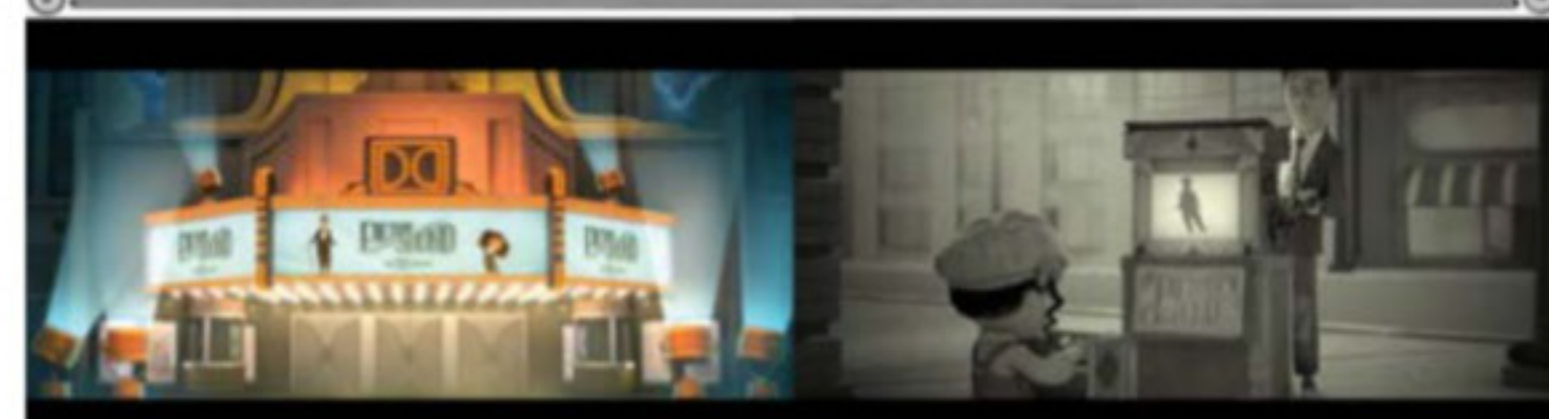
You should also have faith in yourself as a designer to come up with those key ideas. Cox believes "there's a reason the brand has hired you to work with them instead of the other people they may have been considering. You bring something unique to their story." Bloom concurs: "It's my job as a graphic designer to push the boundaries as much as possible while still keeping a consistent brand message."

Art director Junaid Verka puts forward his view on what to do first: "Always go through the company profile and check how the company has already advertised products in its campaigns, so that you can do something different to the previous ad while keeping the brand image." However, you cannot have the same free rein that you may have on a commission for a new brand, as was the case in Bloom's experience: "Established brands often have quite strict brand guidelines that need to be adhered to, which can sometimes limit creativity." Cox too, sees the importance of recognising when to keep within a brief. "It's their story. Not yours. Inject too much of yourself into it and you run the risk of being too far outside the box."



**Rowse redesign:** Following the original redesign of Rowse Honey by BrandOpus in 2010, the brand saw a significant uplift in sales. Now the nation's best-selling spread and leading honey brand, it was time to create an iconic new presentation for Rowse that would underpin their status as the foremost experts in honey.





The picture and sound show: "A silent short film for Dolby Presents. We integrated the Dolby logo into the design of the theatre doors and illuminated in neon above the Picture and Sound Marquee"

## TOP 5 BRANDING TIPS

RELEASE THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR DESIGNS USING THESE TRIED-AND-TESTED TECHNIQUES



### ■ Less is more

MARK BLOOM, MASH CREATIVE

Some of the most recognisable brands in the world use a simple marque or logo type; for example, think how simple the Nike tick is. Also, if it works in black, it should work in any colour.



### ■ Know your audience

DAVE COX, ELEVENTY

What trends do your customers resonate with? What do they do when they're not thinking about you? How can you show you care? Go beyond the ideal customer profile and get to know the champions of your product; they'll tell you more than you can imagine.



### ■ Find a balance

PAUL TAYLOR, BRANDOPUS

Always ensure that you are balancing the ability to understand where a brand has come from with the vision for where the brand wants to go to. You must be mindful not to lose the essentials of the past when transforming for the future.



### ■ Scalability

MARK BLOOM, MASH CREATIVE

Consider how the logo will look large and small. It is important that it remains legible, even when scaled down small; on a website, for example.



### ■ Don't get discouraged

GALIN KASTELOV, REALIST

Even though you start full of enthusiasm, you inevitably get low in spirit at some point. In order to push through, you just have to believe in the process.



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## 01 INITIAL CONCEPT

"We started by cleaning up the base image and creating masks for all the elements needed. The shadows were created separately. It's important to create realistic shadows, so we used a good reference to create the base shape then used two curves, one for the holding shadow and one for the directional shadow."

## 02 ADDING MOUNTAINS

"The background was extended further and altered with extra material we shot around the location. All the mountains and hills are built up separately, using good references to give it the right perspective. We integrated the car, airstream and motorbike into the scene and worked on the reflection of Flo, who was shot separately in studio."

## 03 CONCEPT

"We added tracking motion blur to the image to give it some extra life and movement. To achieve this we used the software Virtual Rig and added motion blur to the road and landscape in two stages. We also added motion blur to the reflection of the airstream and Radial Spin blur to the wheels. The final colour style was then added."

Credits:  
Client | Progressive;  
Agency | Arnold;  
Photography | Taylor James;  
Retouch | Taylor James



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King  
OF  
Hearts





# CREATE A BRAND IDENTITY

LEARN HOW TO DEVELOP AND APPLY A BRAND IDENTITY FOR BUSINESS CARDS, WEB AND PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

**M**erge the realms of design and illustration with this simple tutorial. Design and illustration often cross paths and it is therefore necessary to learn how to successfully combine them into one cohesive brand. You will be guided from start to finish and discover new tips and tricks for designing successful branding. In this tutorial, a playful yet professional brand identity for an imaginary art and design studio called King of Hearts will be produced. The brand identity will include a logo, business card, mug and

iPad screen. You may use the scanned-in sketches provided or create your own illustrations for the purpose of this tutorial. Tips on the importance and proper application of typography will also be learnt.

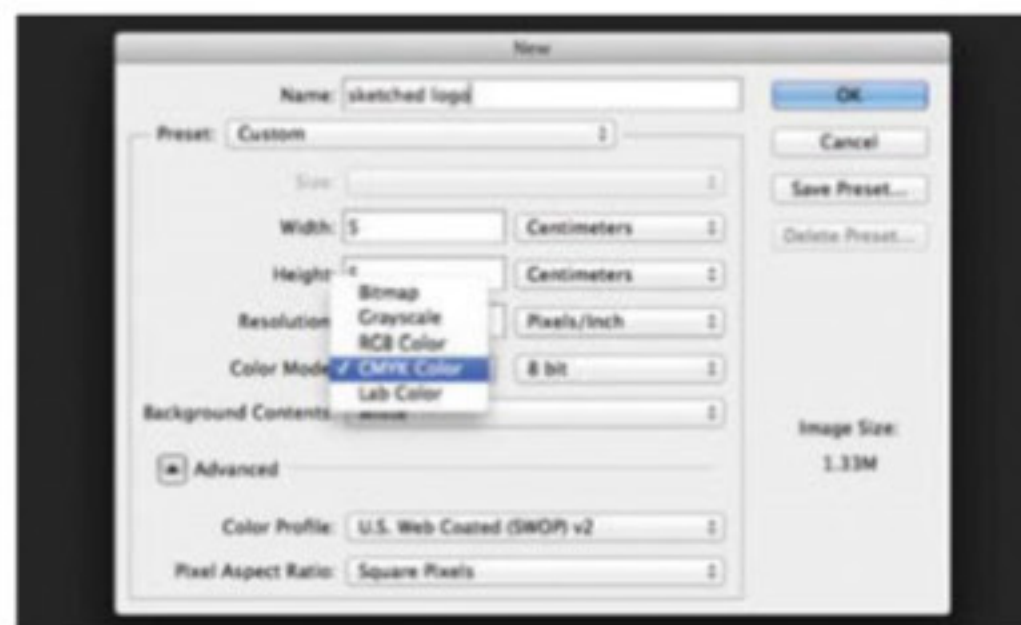
Although producing a brand identity is fairly common, there are various methods and small tips covered in this tutorial that will help you to elevate your design sensitivity. By the end of this tutorial, you should have a better understanding of how illustration and design can be merged into creating a brand identity.

## ILLUSTRATED LOGO

CONVERT A SKETCHED LOGO TO A DIGITAL FORMAT

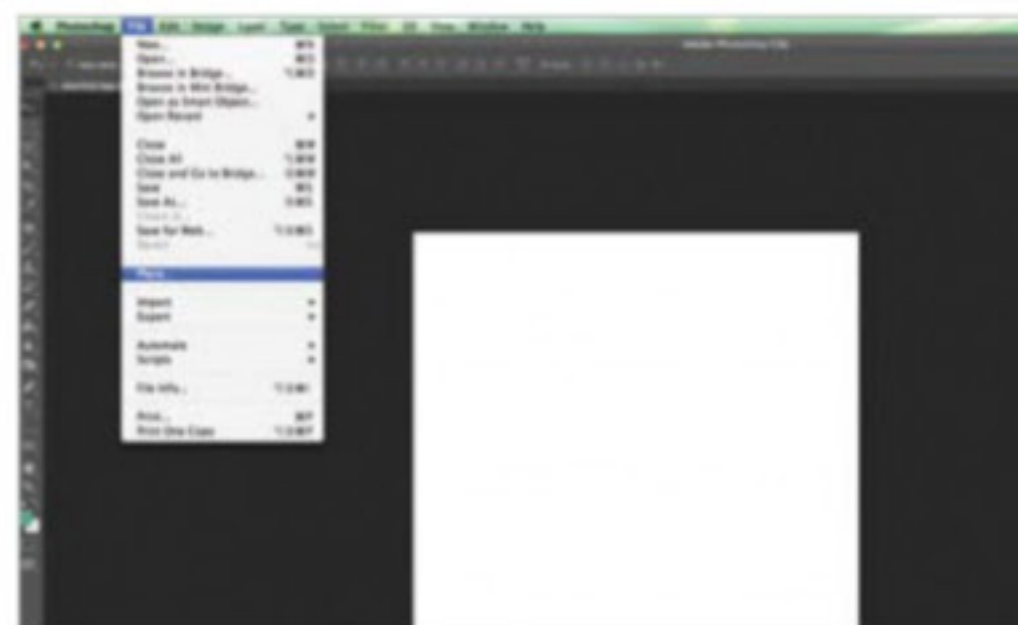
### 01 | DOCUMENT SETTINGS

One of the most important aspects is setting the document's colour mode and resolution. Print media and digital media have different settings, and this should be taken into consideration when designing. Set up a new document (File>New) and set the colour mode to CMYK and the resolution to 300dpi.



### 02 | PLACE SOURCE FILES

In order to begin, you will need to download both the logo and the card motif sketch from FileSilo. Firstly, open a new document, then go to File>Place to place the sketched logo. Make sure that the sketch is centered and locked from the Layers panel.



### 03 | SELECT THE PEN TOOL

The next step would be to select the Pen tool (P) and start tracing the shapes of the sketch. It is important to make sure that the Pen tool is set on Shape mode and not Path mode. The path operations should be set to New Layer. All of these options can be accessed from the top-left bar.



#### OUR EXPERT

**TJAARD DU PLESSIS**  
www.behance.net/tdp1  
@tjaard1

Du Plessis is a graphic and UI/UX designer with a love for illustration. His passion lies within storytelling by means of design.



#### SOURCE FILES

You have access to the various scanned sketches, stock imagery and the branding designs via the FileSilo download.

### WORK IN PROGRESS

FROM SKETCH TO FINISHED LOGO



Progress 1: Place the sketch



Progress 2: Draw the shapes



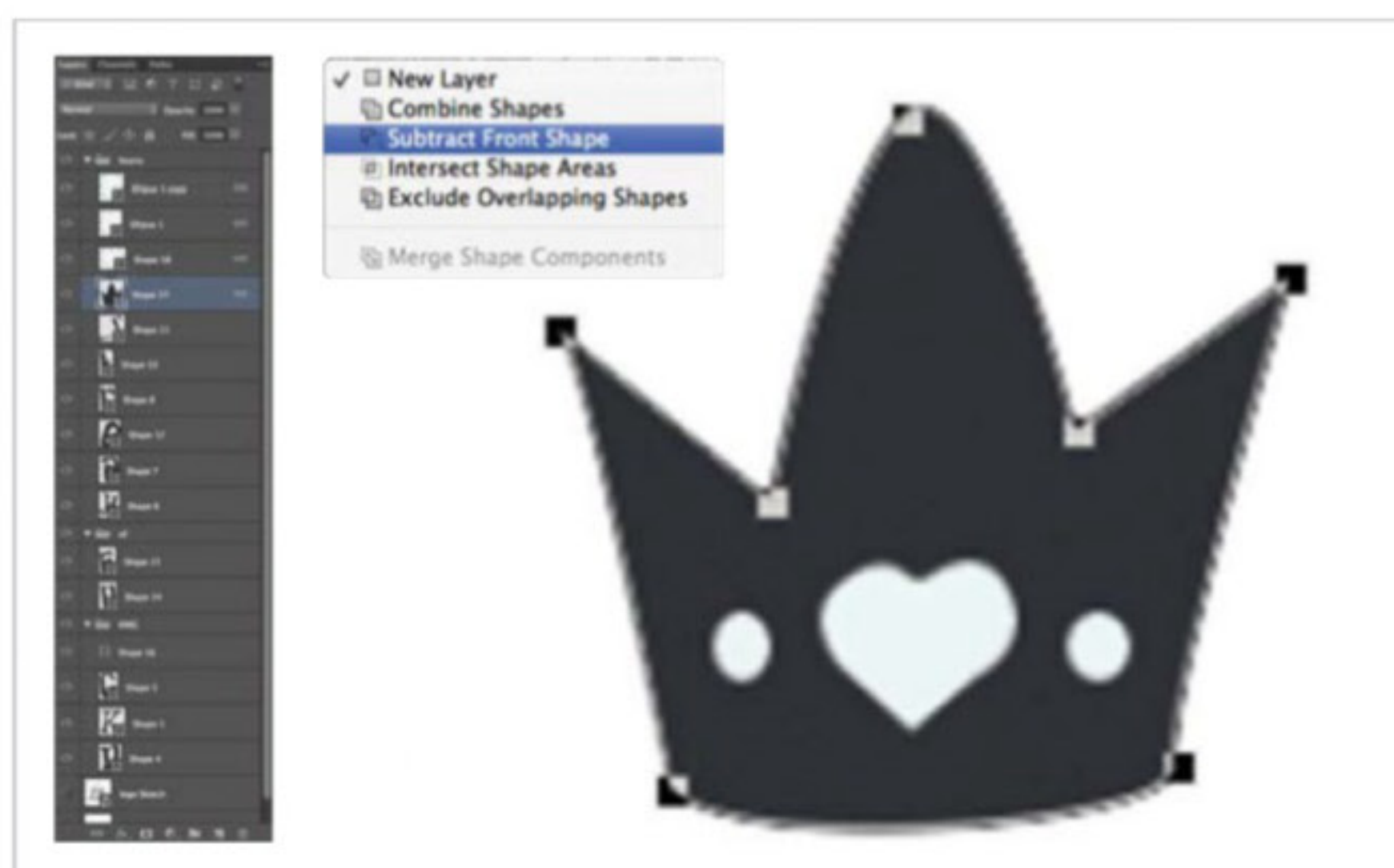
Progress 3: Final logo





## 04 | TRACE THE SHAPES

With the Pen tool still selected, start tracing the shapes from the sketch by clicking on a point and following the sketch outlines. It is easier to trace small bits of the sketch in rectangular shapes and merge them later than it is to trace one large shape at a time. This will increase the accuracy of the tracing process. Do not worry about the inner shape cutouts at this point.



## 05 | SUBTRACT FROM SHAPE

Specific shapes may require inner cutouts, such as the letters 'a' and 'e'. Select the shape that requires a cutout from the Layers panel. Make sure that the Pen tool is still selected. Go to the Path Operations setting by the top bar containing the Pen tool selections and select Subtract Front Shape. Lower the opacity of the previously drawn shape in order to see the sketch, then trace the inner cutout. This should subtract the new shape from the other.

## 06 | TRANSFORM THE SHAPES

With a shape selected in the Layers panel, go to Edit>Free Transform Path. Readjust the size, position and angle of the shapes so that they fit together more fluently. This is similar to adjusting the kerning of text. Make sure that the shapes are placed at differing heights in comparison to one another.

## 07 | COLOUR SWATCHES

The next step would be to decide upon the colours/swatches. If the colours need to be swatches, go to Window>Swatches in order to display a broad range of colours to choose from. Pick colours that complement each other and research colour theory. It is generally safer to make use of a limited colour palette and incorporate between two and three colours. You can use the Eyedropper tool to select the appropriate colours.

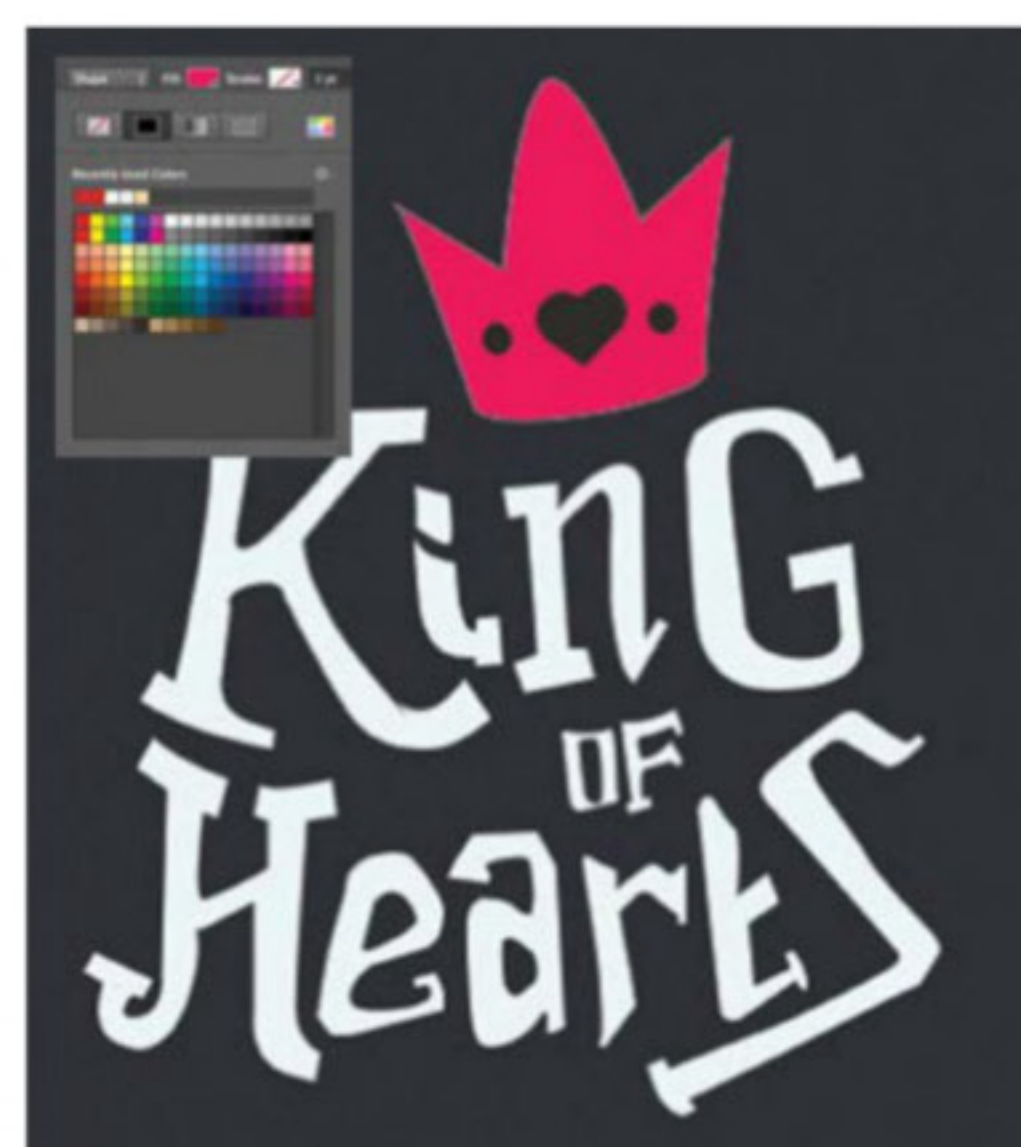


## 08 | COLOUR APPLICATION

It is fairly easy to change the colour of objects when they are still in shapes and have not yet been rasterised. Select the shapes from the Layers panel – you can hold Cmd/Ctrl to select multiple shapes. Select the Rectangle tool (U) then move to the top bar and select Fill. You will then be able to select a new or recently eyedropped colour for the shapes.

### ■ QUICK TIP

When transforming or re-adjusting the illustrated text shapes, keep in mind that the letters on the edges should be larger and the letters on the inside smaller. This will help to contain the text elements and help it appear as a unit.



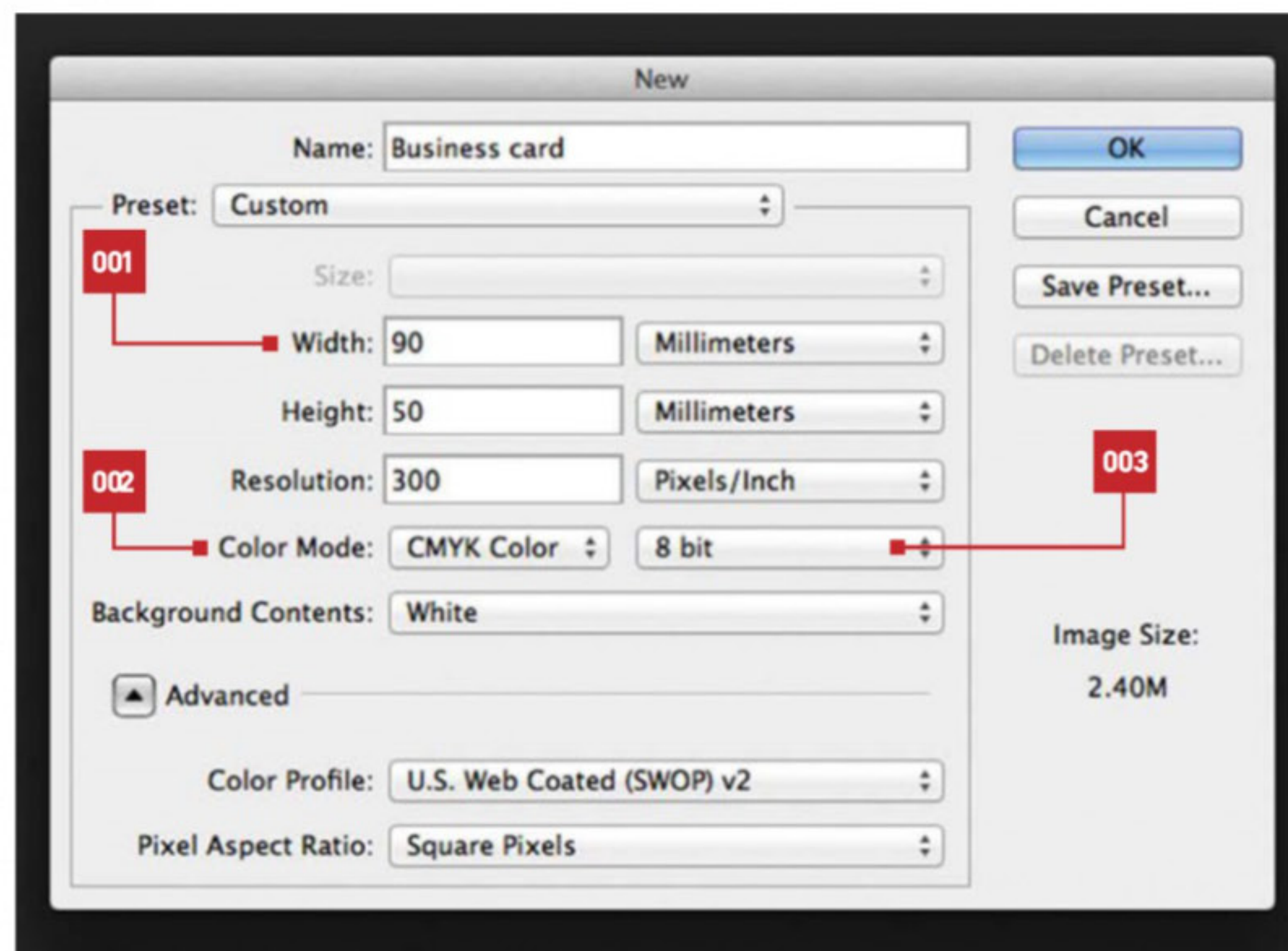


## LOGO APPLICATION

APPROPRIATELY USE THE LOGO IN A DESIGN

### 09 BUSINESS CARD DOCUMENT

Create a new document by going to File>New. It is important to set and use the appropriate dimensions and resolution. A standard business card's dimensions are 90mm x 50mm or vice versa, depending on whether a landscape or portrait orientation is required. For the purposes of this tutorial, a landscape orientation will be applied. It is important to set the resolution to 300dpi.



#### 001 | DIMENSIONS

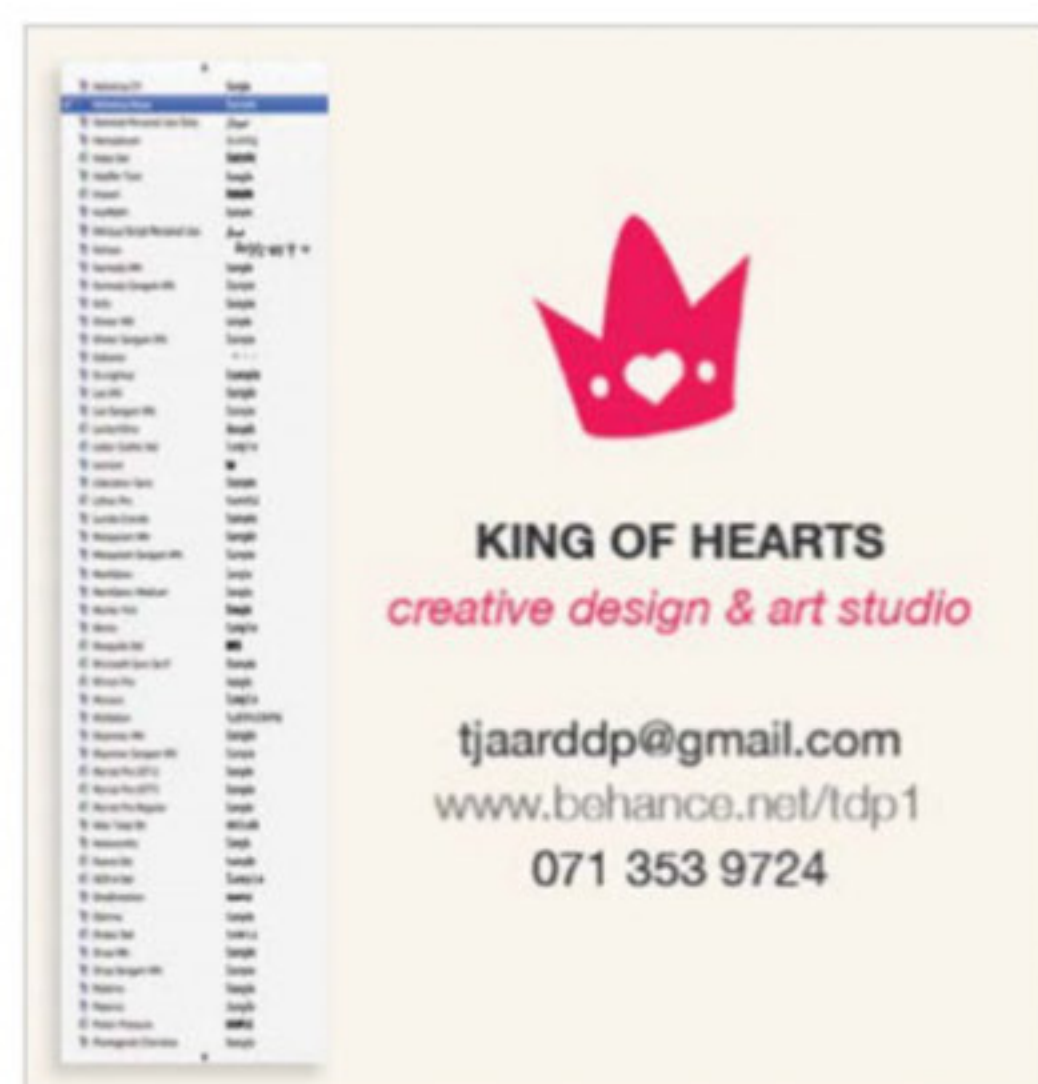
Always make sure that the dimensions are correct and set to the right unit

#### 002 | COLOUR MODE

The colour mode should be set to CMYK for Print media at a resolution of 300dpi

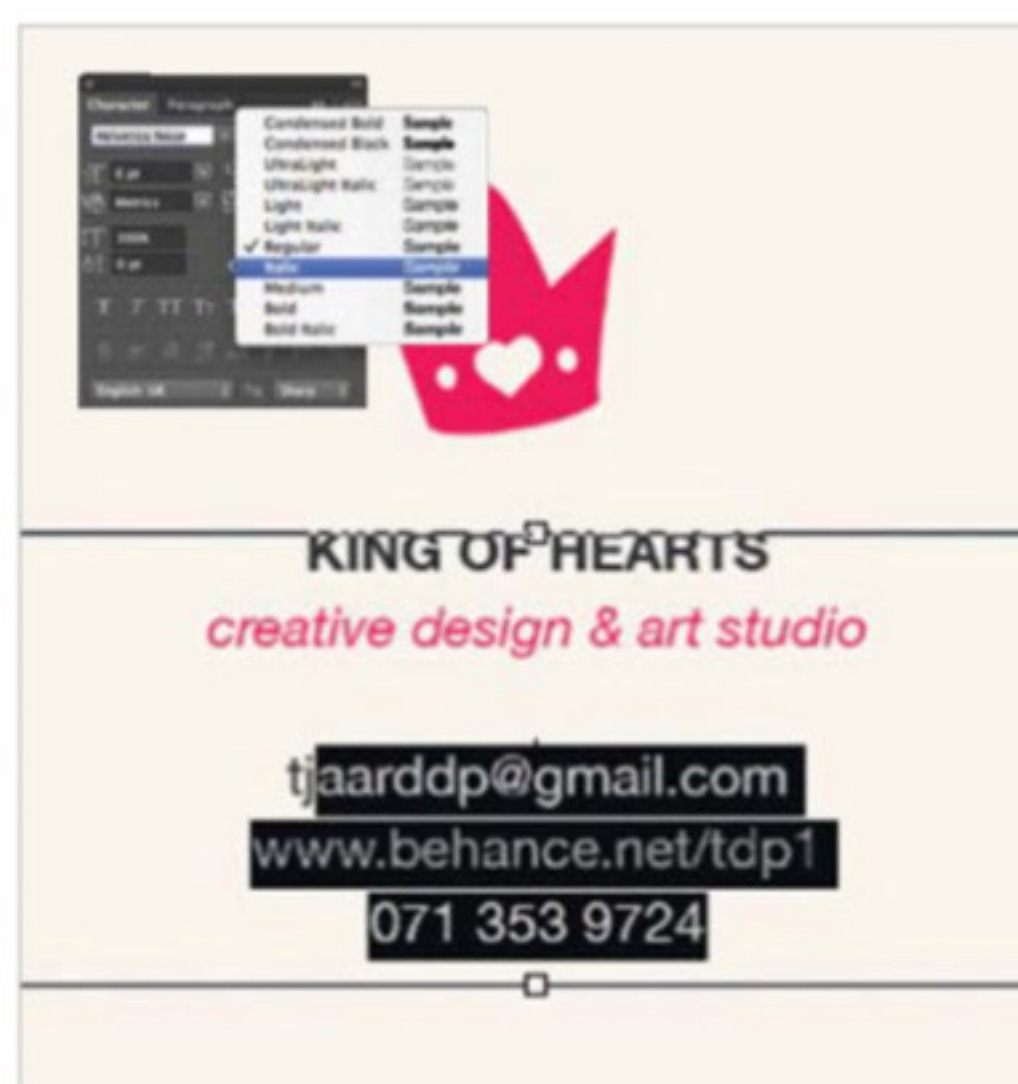
#### 003 | 8-BIT PIXEL

The colour should be 8-bit pixel mode – higher is generally for editing and will result in large files



### 12 TYPOGRAPHY SELECTION

Typography selection has a big impact on the brand's design aesthetic. When an illustrated or detailed logo is used, it is usually better to make use of a simple or sans serif font. A font with various weights is usually the best option. Differing weights create visual hierarchy. In the case of this tutorial, Helvetica Neue was used in order to create contrast between the logo and the text.



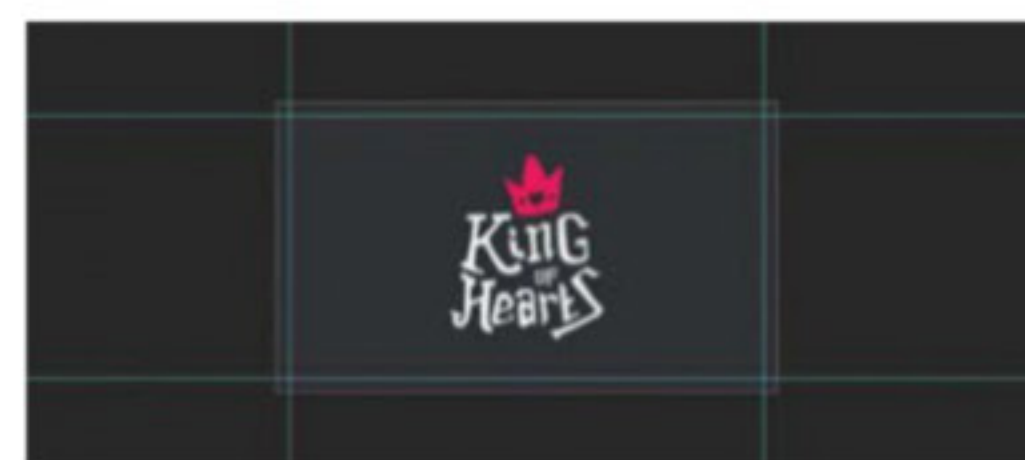
### 13 TYPE RULES

When arranging the type, set it to points instead of pixels by going to Photoshop>Preferences>Units and Rulers>Set type to points. It is a rule of thumb not to go smaller than 6pt, but also not to go bigger than 9/10pt. The heading should not be wide enough for another line to fit in-between the lines. Visual hierarchy is achieved by using differing font weights.



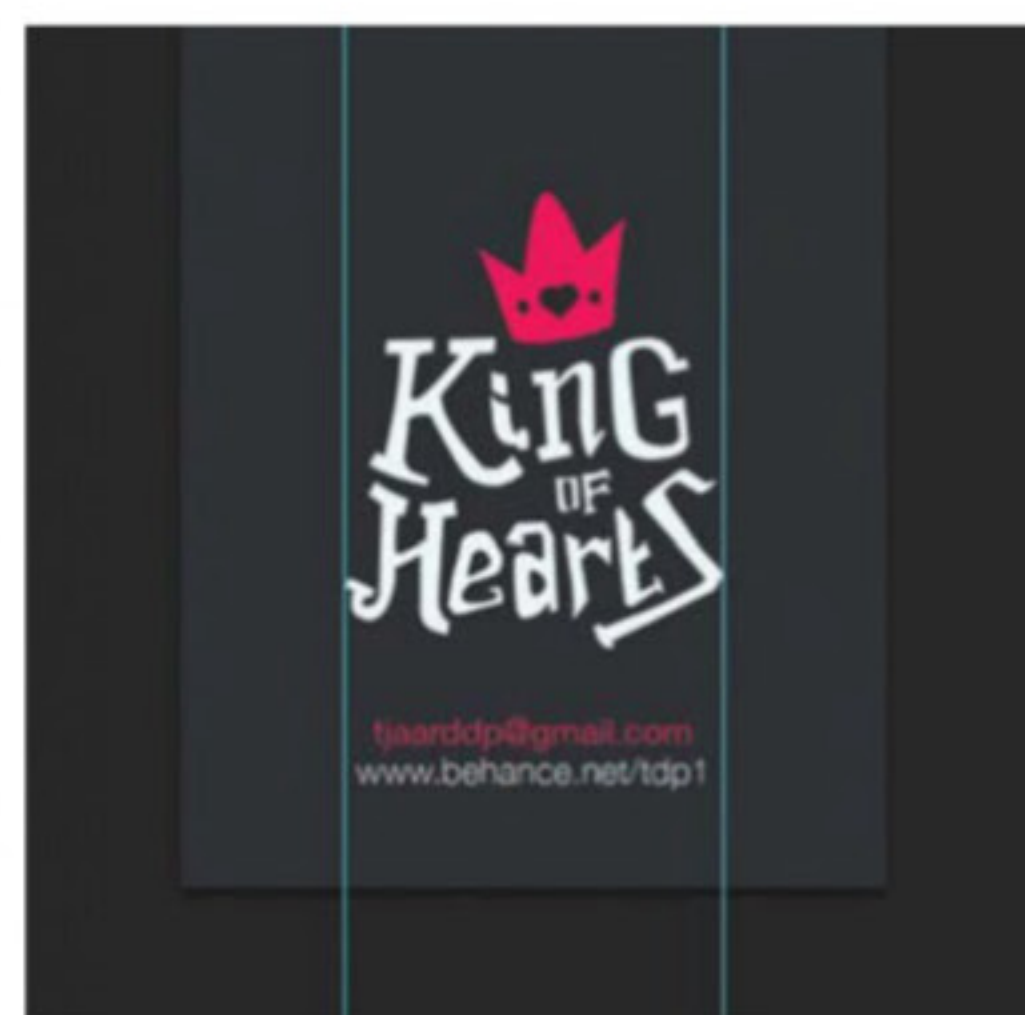
### 10 SETTING THE BLEED

You should always set a bleed to cover up any shifts of plates or paper in the printing process. Setting up a bleed in Photoshop is slightly different to other platforms. Once the document dimensions have been created, place ruler guides (Cmd/Ctrl+R) on the edges. Create a bleed of 5mm by extending the canvas. Go to Image>Canvas Size, then tick the relative box and extend the canvas width and height by 5mm.



### 11 DESIGN ELEMENTS

It is important to carefully consider how many elements are to be placed upon a business card. In this scenario, less is more, as the logo is illustrated and is in itself not simple. Design is about contrast and balance. As the logo is not simple, it needs to be balanced out by simplicity. Therefore, the front side of the business card will have a flat background colour with the logo centre-aligned above it.



### 14 MUG DESIGN APPLICATION

The application of a logo on branding elements has to be carefully considered and thoughtfully designed. It is not as simple as slapping a logo onto an element. The colour usage has to be considered depending on the colour of the mug and how contrast can be created. In a new document at 50mm x 80mm, a logo was placed with relevant information about the brand. It is important to keep the design simple.



## IPAD SCREEN

DESIGNING FOR DIGITAL MEDIA

### 15 PLACE SKETCH

The iPad screen will be a card motif. In a new document, go to File>Place in order to position the card motif sketch. After the sketch has been placed, go to the Layers panel and select the blending mode. The blending mode should be switched to Multiply. This will allow any other layers below to appear through the sketch's negative space.



### 16 ADD COLOUR

Start by adding a background colour to the document to replace the white background. In new layers underneath the sketch layer set to Multiply, select a hard brush and start filling in colour. Go to Window>Brush and select a suitable brush. Use a new layer for each section or colour of the sketch. It is important to group all relevant layers.



### 17 ADD FINAL DETAILS

After adding colour, darker colour or shadows may be added to contour the illustration. Be sure to use a clipping mask in order to contain the shadow to a specific layer. The top half of the illustration should then be duplicated and transformed. Go to Layer>Duplicate Group then Edit>Free Transform to rotate the layer. Final details such as the logos and small patterns with a hard brush can be added in order to complete the illustration. It is important to make sure that both the top and bottom part of the illustration are aligned correctly.

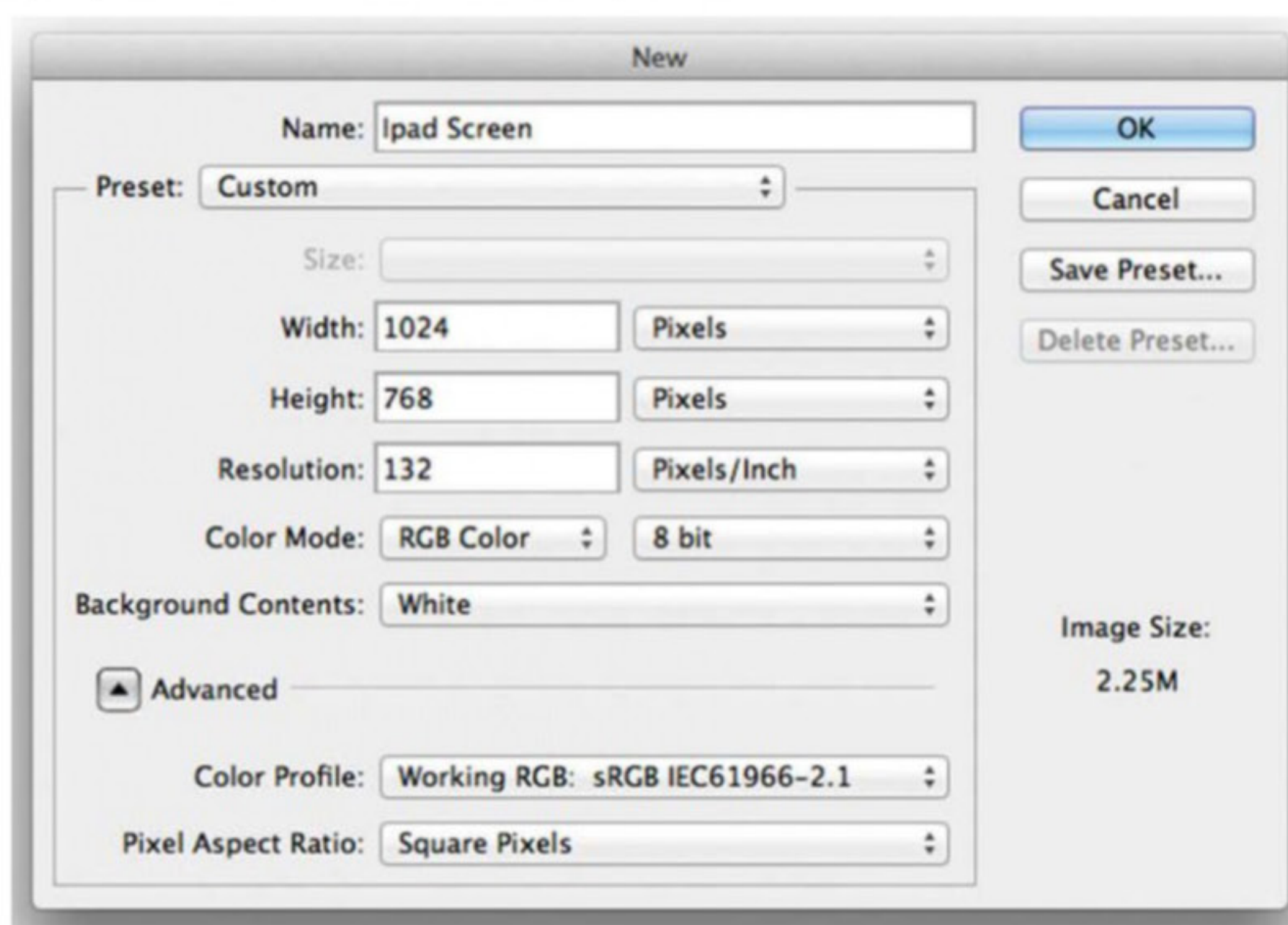


### LAYER MASKS

Layer masks are extremely useful when removing elements non-destructively from a specific group or layer. Even though the area involved will visually be removed, it has not been removed from the layer and may be reapplied at any time. In the Layers panel in the bottom bar is the Add Layer Mask option. With the relevant layer selected, click on this option. It will create a new white block in the layer. With this block and the Brush tool selected, details or elements may be removed from the canvas. Alternate between adding and removing by pressing the X button.

### 18 DOCUMENT SETUP

When designing for a digital platform, certain specifications need to be taken into account in comparison to print media when setting up the document. Set up a new document by going to File>New. The colour mode should be set to RGB with a resolution 132 ppi. The dimensions for a standard iPad are 1024px by 768px. The card motif illustration should then be placed within the iPad document.



### QUICK TIP

Use as many layers as necessary and group them accordingly in order to avoid clutter.





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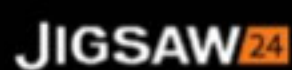
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# MASTER ARCHITECTURAL RETOUCHING

PLANNING, CREATIVITY AND COLOUR BALANCE CAN GIVE A FLAT IMAGE VISUAL DEPTH AND AN EVOCATIVE LOOK

**T**he job of architectural retouching is to make a shot of a building more than merely a photograph. It should represent the idealised physical reality of the building, removing the extraneous clutter of city life (cars, traffic signs, litter) and enhancing the scene with better lighting, an improved sky, and a sense of calm focus that makes the building the star. To do this, you'll need to master retouching and compositing techniques.

Retouching and compositing is just like assembling a 1000-piece puzzle. For every tiny

piece that you connect, you will be one step closer to completion. To avoid becoming overwhelmed, focus on the part, not the whole.

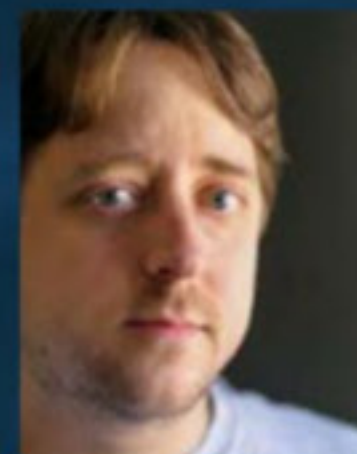
No matter what type of image you need to work on, it will come with many different challenges. Before you start retouching, pretend you have already finished. What does the image look like? What steps did you take to create it? Start every project by planning backwards. Imagine the steps you are going to need to take to get the project where you want it. Look at the various elements that you are going to use, and try working out all

the problems in your head first. Figuring out how you would solve the issues up front will make it easier once you get into the complex part of the retouching later. Fifteen minutes now could save you hours later.

During the planning phase, you may want to create a quick and loose mock-up for yourself. You might even scribble some notes across the image to help guide you in the right direction. Give yourself a bird's-eye view of the project before you get in deep with the details. Ready? Let's get started.







#### OUR EXPERT

**JOHN ROSS**

[www.TheArtofRetouching.com](http://www.TheArtofRetouching.com)

John educates photographers and retouchers by helping them expand their creativity through Photoshop from his website, and the classes he teaches from New Haven, Connecticut.

#### SOURCE FILES

The image used for this tutorial can be found at [dreamstime.com/stock-images-building-modern-architecture-image7184644](https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-images-building-modern-architecture-image7184644).



## WORK IN PROGRESS FROM STOCK PHOTO TO FINISHED ART



Progress 1: Planning



Progress 2: Correcting, cloning and compositing



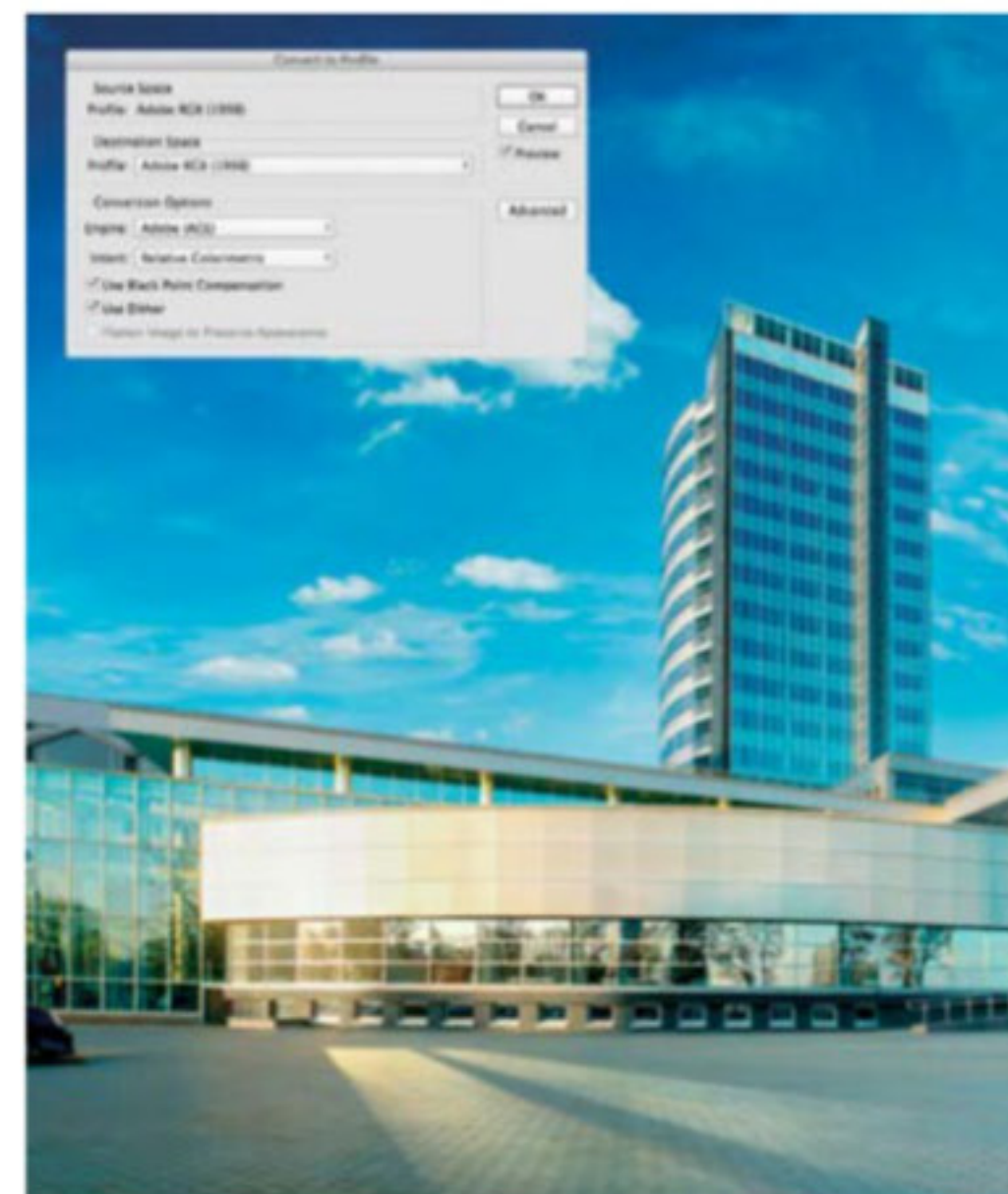
Progress 3: Final effects



## 01 | PLANNING AHEAD

When starting a new project, everything seems to be uphill battles with very complex solutions. Try and pace yourself. Don't tackle everything at once. Plan it out, and take it one step at a time. Create a to-do list with notes for yourself. Maybe even put together a quick composite to see where you are going.

“Don't tackle everything at once. Plan it out, and take it one step at a time”



## 02 | TECHNICAL ISSUES

Before detailed retouching, start by getting the technical details out of the way. This image is supplied in an Untagged Color Profile. Use Edit>Convert to Profile and make it AdobeRGB, which is a safe profile to use as it is a common industry standard. Resize the artwork to match the final printed size, if it will be larger than the existing file. If it will print smaller, keep the larger size. For magazine work, keep in mind the gutter (gap between the pages), and the outside bleed that will be trimmed.



## 03 | TOUGH CLONING

Start by clicking the 'Create New Layer' button in the Layers palette. Clone the background building from the right side, to left. There is just enough information to add the entire left side of the building. Once you get the first row completed, then clone down two more times, making a duplicate pattern. Right now, it's three rows of an exact match, but you can fix it later. Bit by bit, it starts to come together. Before you know it, the task will be done, and no-one will know.



## 04 | PACE YOURSELF

Before getting into the creative part, start by correcting the severe flaws first. When you find yourself stressing over the details, zoom out. How bad is it? Stop 'pixel peeping' and getting too close. If it's not noticeable, then don't worry about it. No one will ever look as closely as you are. In this case, we have just started fixing things. There is still plenty of time to work out any remaining problems once you get to the later stages, and can see the image coming together.



#### ■ QUICK TIP

While lens flares create drama and add unity to your images, try to use them sparingly. Photoshop comes with a few limited flares. If you enjoy using them, you should look into the Knoll Light Factory plug-in, which comes with several dozen completely different and customisable flare types.



### 05 LOWER BUILDING

The back building on the left has the same roofline, with the building in front of it. Drop the background building to offset it. This will help create some added depth, and make it clear they are two different buildings. Also, by dropping the building down and cloning from the ground up, you will find that you can easily cover over the car so it's gone. This is why working on separate layers for all the parts is so important.



### 06 SCALE THE GROUND

After cloning over the car, you can select all the layers and use Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+Shift+E to merge all selected layers into a new flattened layer. Usually, you should avoid doing this as it is a permanent change, leaving old layers behind. But in this case, the option we need to use will only work on flattened layers. Use the Lasso to select the left side of the ground. Use Edit>Content-Aware Scale to stretch out the ground so that it stretches the brick pattern in a believable way.



### 07 SCALE THE SKY

Once again, use Edit>Content-Aware Scale, only this time you will be grabbing the left of the sky. There is a huge difference between using Edit>Free Transform, and Edit>Content-Aware Scale. Basically, this tool will try to keep solid objects from stretching, and prefers to distort big, open areas. For this sky, you will find that it pushes the clouds apart by adding more blue between them. The goal here is to fill in extra white space on the left, but not distort any of the clouds themselves.



### 08 DOOR REFLECTIONS

The doors that you cloned in will appear to have a repeating pattern. By adding a random reflection, it will be less obvious. Select the Combined layer, Ctrl/right-click, and select 'Convert to Smart Object'. Select the glass on the doors however you would like, and add several filters to add the illusion of depth and transparency. Play with different filters to see what you can get. Try Filter>Distort>Ripple, Filter>Pixelate>Facet, Filter>Render>Clouds, and Filter>Render>Fibers. The first one will apply the selection as a Smart Filter Mask.



### 09 DOOR DETAILS

At this point, you should start focusing in on some of the details for the doors. While the previous reflections help quite a lot, taking the time to add highlights and shadows around the frame of the doors will really help. Also be sure to include some final touches on the door windows by adding some shading to the top and bottoms. Maybe even add some door handles. This will once again break up the impression of having a repeating pattern across the various doors.





**10 | SMART OBJECTS**  
Select all of your layers, and use the slide-out menu to select 'Convert to Smart Object'. Select the new Smart Object layer, and drag it onto the 'Create New Layer' icon. One layer will be used for the background sky; the other layer will be for the foreground building. By separating them, we can colour-correct more easily. We now have a complete full-sized image, with the basic elements laid out where we want them. Time to start creative retouching!

**12 | LAYER ORDER MATTERS**  
Before the heavy retouching, consider your imaginary layering order. How will the parts stack together? Which elements will be created by hand and which ones can be filters? Which parts need adjustment layers, and which can be done in the Camera Raw filter? What is in the foreground, what goes in the background? How do things group together? Keep your pixel layers on the bottom, and adjustment layers on top. If you can keep them separate, it will allow for more flexibility later on.



**001 | PREPARE FOR SUCCESS**

Create a list of things you need to get done before starting. Planning up front will help you avoid problems later

**002 | FIXING CORE PROBLEMS**

When working with stock images, who knows where the images came from? Be prepared to spend some time fixing basic issues

**003 | FOCUS ON DETAILS**

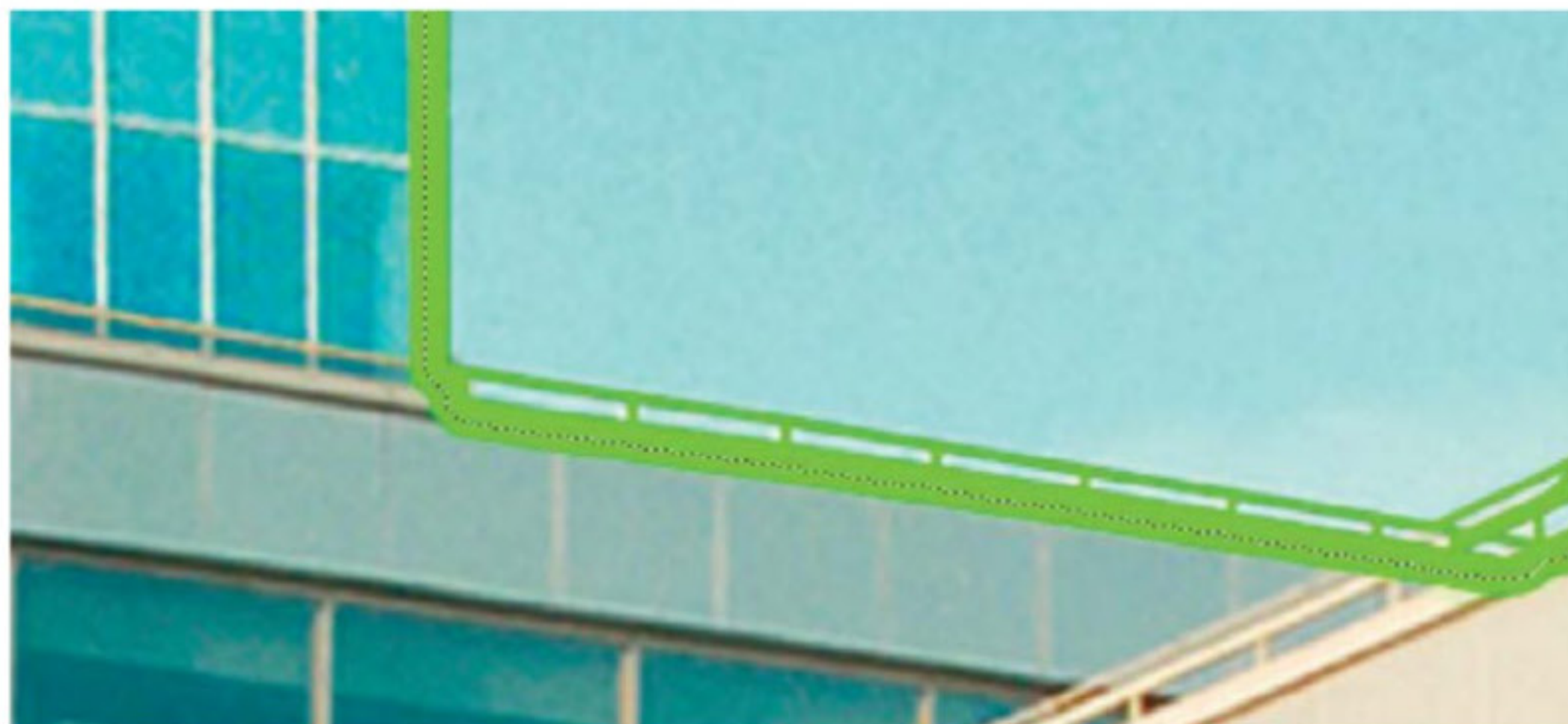
Take the time to create subtle highlights and allow objects to pass through each other. The results are worth the effort

**004 | ENJOY THE CREATIVITY**

Even on the most technical images, there is still a world of play and experimentation to explore. Who knows what will happen?

**■ QUICK TIP**

Camera Raw Filter comes with the same power as Adobe Camera Raw. Only now, you can use it on any layer from within Photoshop. If used on a Smart Object, it will become a Smart Filter. This will give you the ability to jump in and out as you develop your images.



**11 | MASKING THE BUILDING**  
While some retouchers prefer to silhouette with the Pen tool, learning how to use the Quick Mask (Q) and a small brush will give the most realistic results. Once the building is outlined, fill the mask in. Using the Magic Wand and Select>Modify>Expand 5-8 pixels, then filling with black, will overlap any soft edges. Push the Q key again to come out of Quick Mask. Select the top layer, and click the 'Add Layer Mask' button at the bottom of the Layers palette to apply the mask.



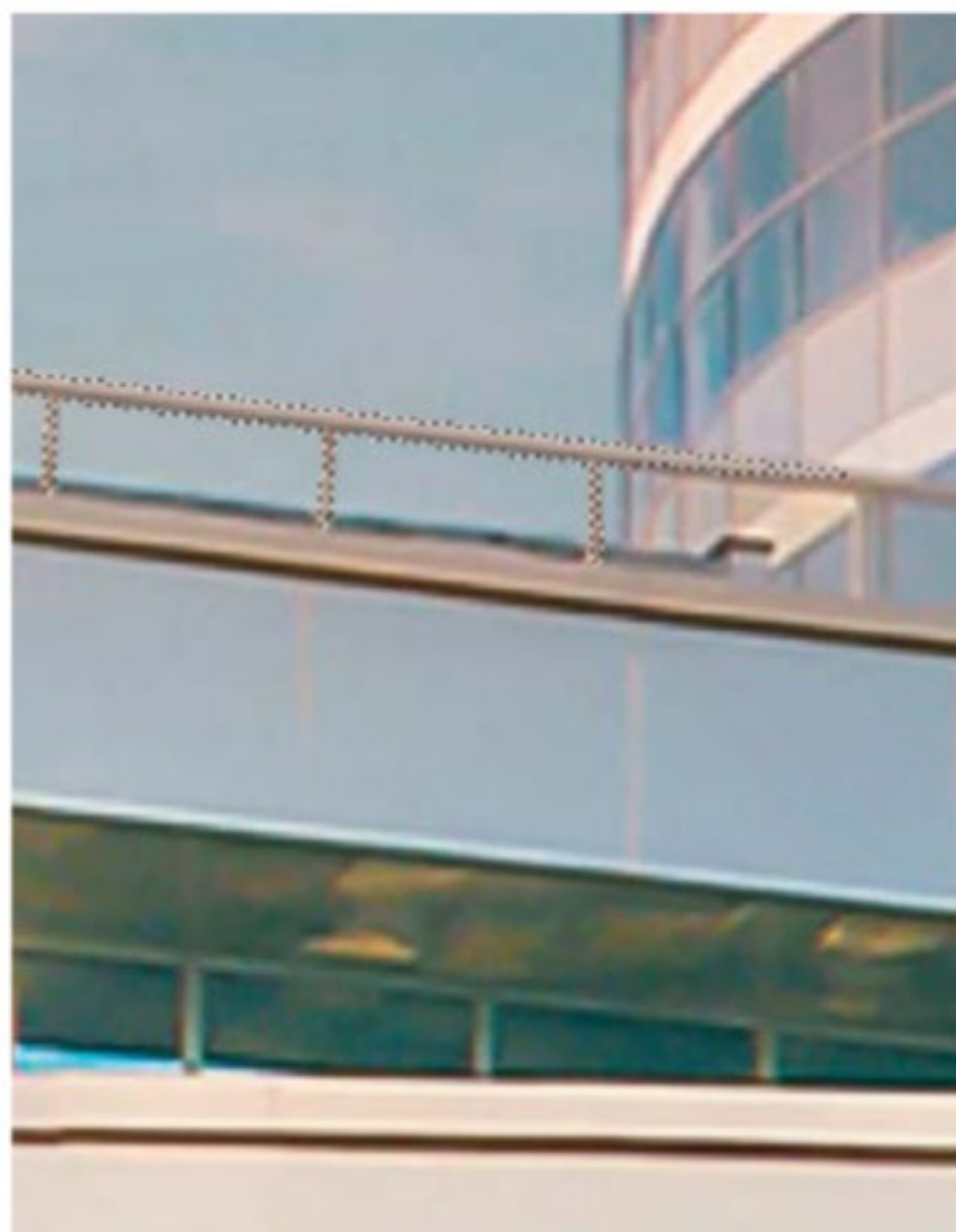
**13 | CUT IN MASKING**  
During the silhouetting stage, pay close attention to details. You need to come close to the edge, but be sure not to drift over the side. Leave a few pixels behind that will be cut off from the mask. No one will miss a few pixels when you cut in. If you cut wide, everyone will see it as a mistake. Generally, when zooming in 200-400%, leave 3-4 pixels behind. This will give the clean result you are looking for.



**14 | COLOUR CORRECTIONS**  
Now that the foreground and background elements are separated, you can use Filter>Camera Raw Filter to make your colour and tonal changes on the building layer. Be sure to enhance the warm tones, and really pull out the sunset colours. On the bottom sky layer, you can give the blue a much darker and deeper tone. Use the Graduated Filter to really bring out the deep blue and warm oranges from the various directions. Because this has nothing to do with the building, you can play with it more easily.



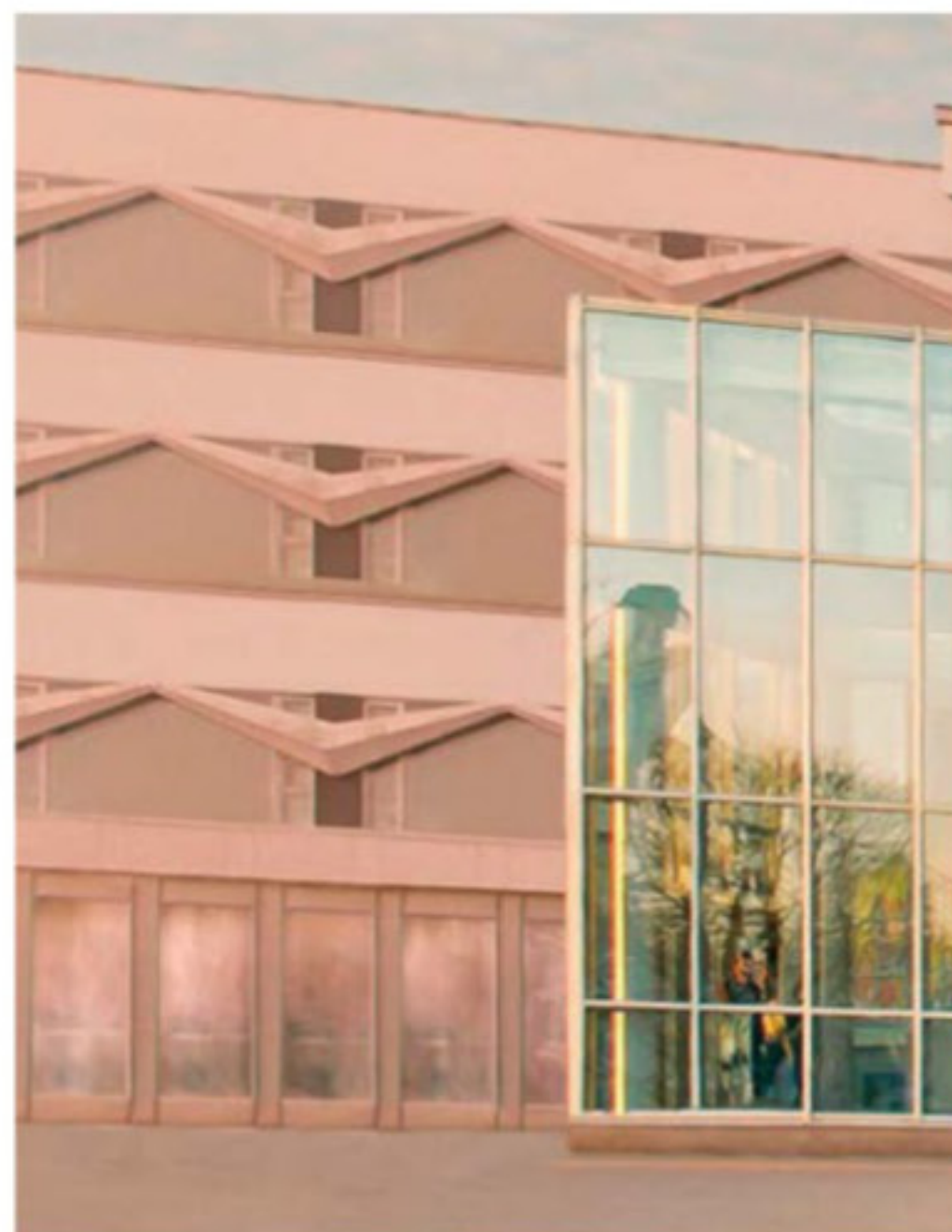
“ Smart Objects and adjustment layers provide the flexibility necessary to give you a truly non-destructive workflow ”



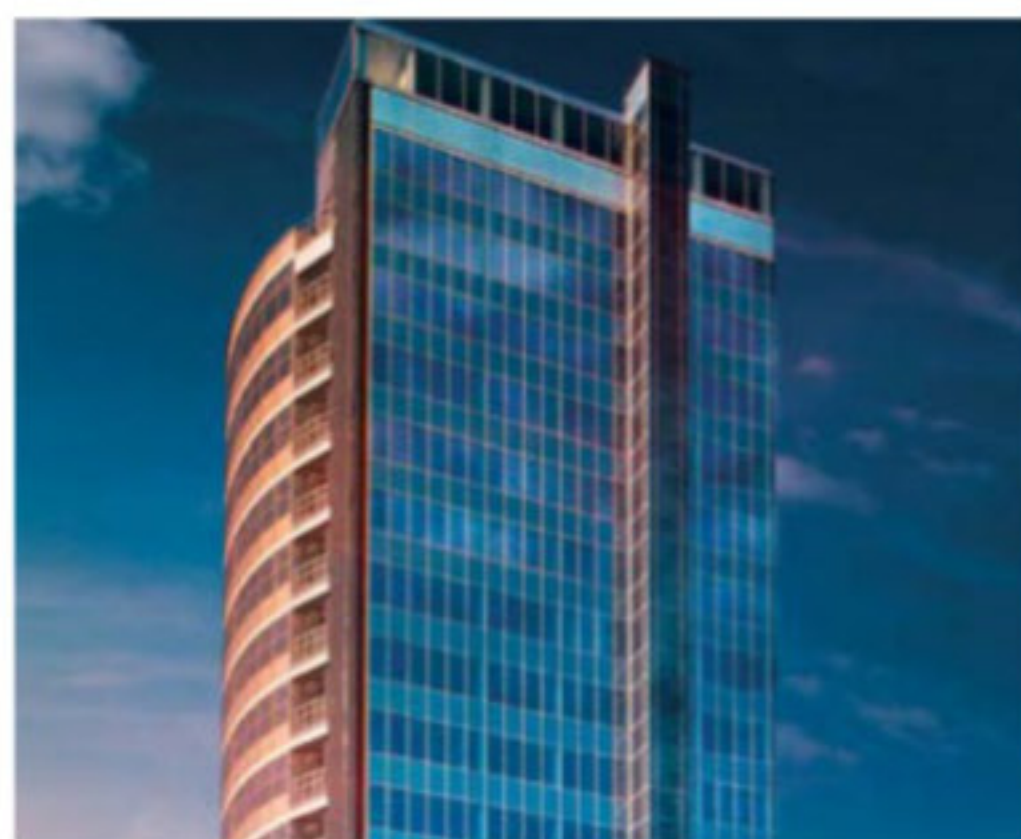
**15 MISSING RAILING** Notice how there is a railing that runs from the right to the left at the base of the tower, but then stops? This is poor cloning on the image as it's been supplied. The simple solution is to push the 'Create New Layer' button at the bottom of the Layers palette. Use the Eye Dropper to grab the same colour from the existing railing. Use the Brush tool to begin painting with a small brush. Add some reflections to the railing as well.



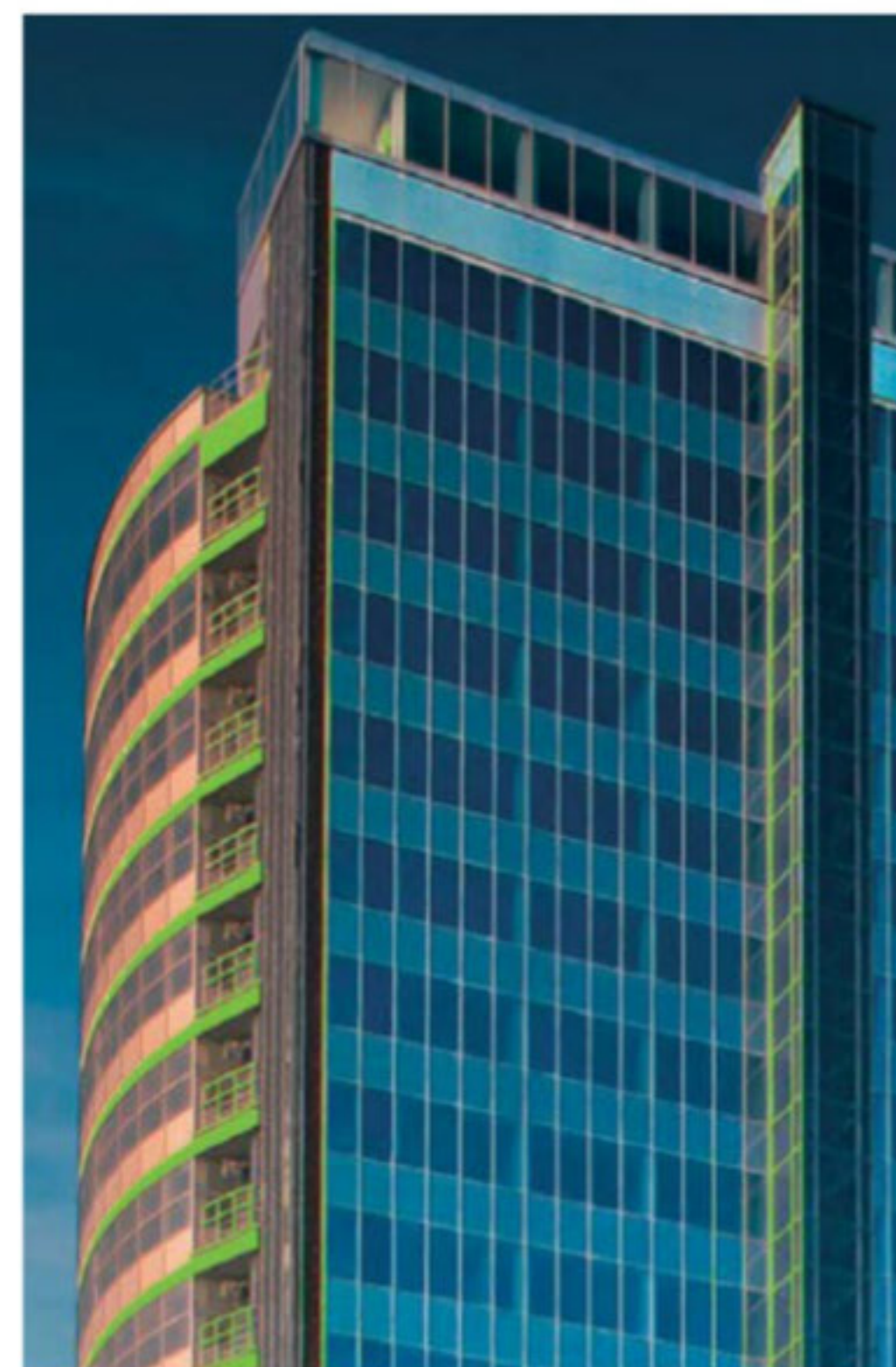
**18 LENS FLARE** Make the image more dynamic by adding a lens flare. You could either use one built into Photoshop from Filters>Render>Lens Flare, or use one from the Knoll Light Factory plug-in, which has dozens to choose from. This image was created with Knoll's Flash Gordon settings. To do this, create a black layer on top. Ctrl/right-click and select 'Convert to Smart Object'. Change the blend mode to Screen, and then select a lens flare of your choice. This will add it to the layer as an adjustable Smart Filter.



**16 SIDE BUILDING** Some more depth can be added to the left side building. Push it further into the distance by lightening the shadows with Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Curves and bring the left side of the curve up. As objects go into the distance, they become lighter with fewer details. You can also add some more sunset warmth as well, by using Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Photo Filter at 41%. You can also adjust the tones by highlighting certain elements to give it more depth with Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Exposure set to +17.



**19 TOWER REFLECTIONS** To add cloud reflections on the tower, start by creating a new blank layer and filling with Filter>Render>Clouds. Select the layer, Ctrl/right-click, and select 'Convert to Smart Object'. Next, you need to grab the dark blues by using Select>Color Range. When you think you have it, push the OK button. You can refine the selection by pushing the Q key for the Quick Mask mode. When done, hit the Q key again. Try various filters to see what you get, like Filter>Distort>Ripple and Filter>Distort>ZigZag.



**17 TOWER HIGHLIGHTS** Sometimes, you really need to pay attention to the small things, like adding some extra highlight details onto the sunny side of the tower. Using a Quick Mask (Q) and a very small brush, paint along the brightest parts of the tower, shown here in green. When you have all the little parts selected, hit the Q key again to come out of the Quick Mask. Then select Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Curves to lighten up the highlighted areas. This will give added depth to the focal point of the image.



**20 FINAL CORRECTIONS** Now you can finally see your vision come to life. Finish by going into the various Smart Objects and adjustment layers and tweak any of the colours, exposures, or filters. You may not have completed all the changes you laid out back in step one, but at least you had a guide. By following along with these steps, you will find amazing flexibility in your file structures. Smart Objects and adjustment layers provide the flexibility necessary to give you a truly non-destructive workflow.



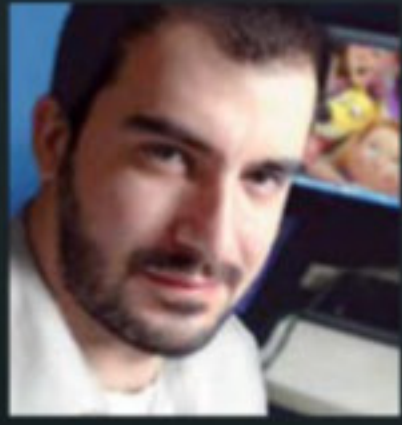


“ I used my Photoshop CS4 and a Bamboo tablet and tried to merge a realistic finish together with more stylised forms ”

© Marcelo Garcia

2D artist, animator, and freelancer at Animam Studio, Marcelo Garcia created this stylised character to be the magazine cover for Mundo Estranho on hypnosis





# HYPNOSIS

## MARCELO GARCIA

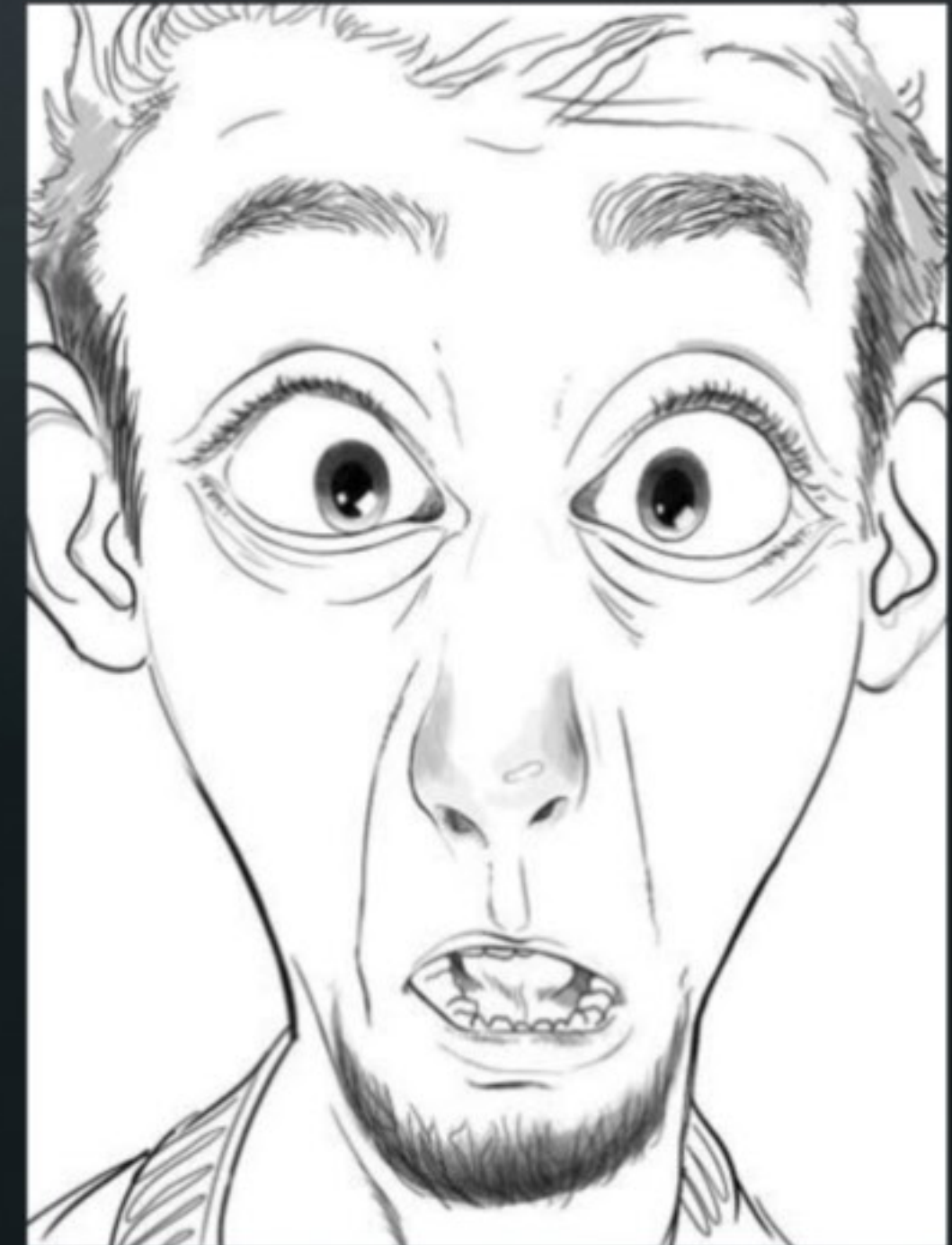
DISCOVER HOW TO CREATE HYPNOTIC CARICATURES WITH PHOTOSHOP

**A**fter having had experience working for several Brazilian magazines in the past, 2D artist, animator, and freelancer at Animam Studio Marcelo Garcia ([www.animamstudio.com](http://www.animamstudio.com)) was the perfect artist to work on a new teen magazine cover for *Mundo Estranho*.

The subject, however, was a challenging one. Garcia's vibrant freelance work – no doubt in part inspired by the Disney animations he grew up on – usually involved developing projects for

advertising. This needed to be something eye-catchingly different, and feature his own artistic take on hypnosis. "I used my Photoshop CS4 and a Bamboo tablet," Garcia reveals to us, "and tried to merge a realistic finish together with more stylised forms. Overall, this work brought me many good times. It was so much fun to create!"

The first step after studying the client's briefing was to develop a quick scene sketch using a simple, hard brush.



### 01 CHARACTER DESIGN

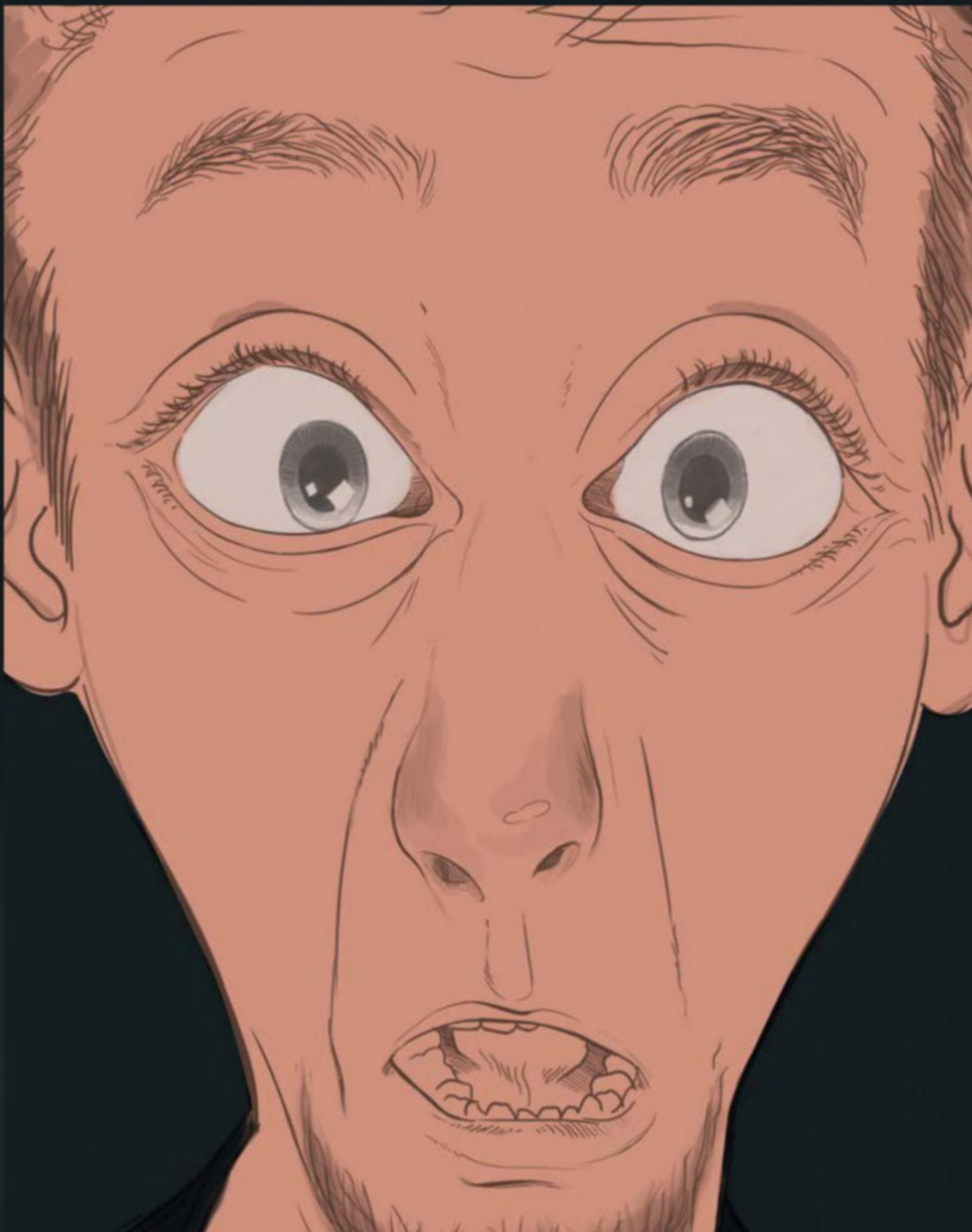
I created a quick, simple sketch for my character with well-defined lines, so that the work wouldn't lose its initial expression. I also always used references to decide which style I could use to better fit to the project's target.

### 02 MASKS AND SHAPES

Next, I filled in the main colours using a Path tool to define masks and shapes. With the sketch layer set to low opacity, I filled colours in blocks using different layers, so that it was easier to paint parts like the inside of the eyes and iris without losing the edges around them.

### 03 BLOCKING COLOURS

I then blocked the colours using a 0% Hardness brush to define blushed skin areas, translucent ears and nose areas, and their shadows. It was useful to look at some references to familiarise myself with human skin particularities for this.





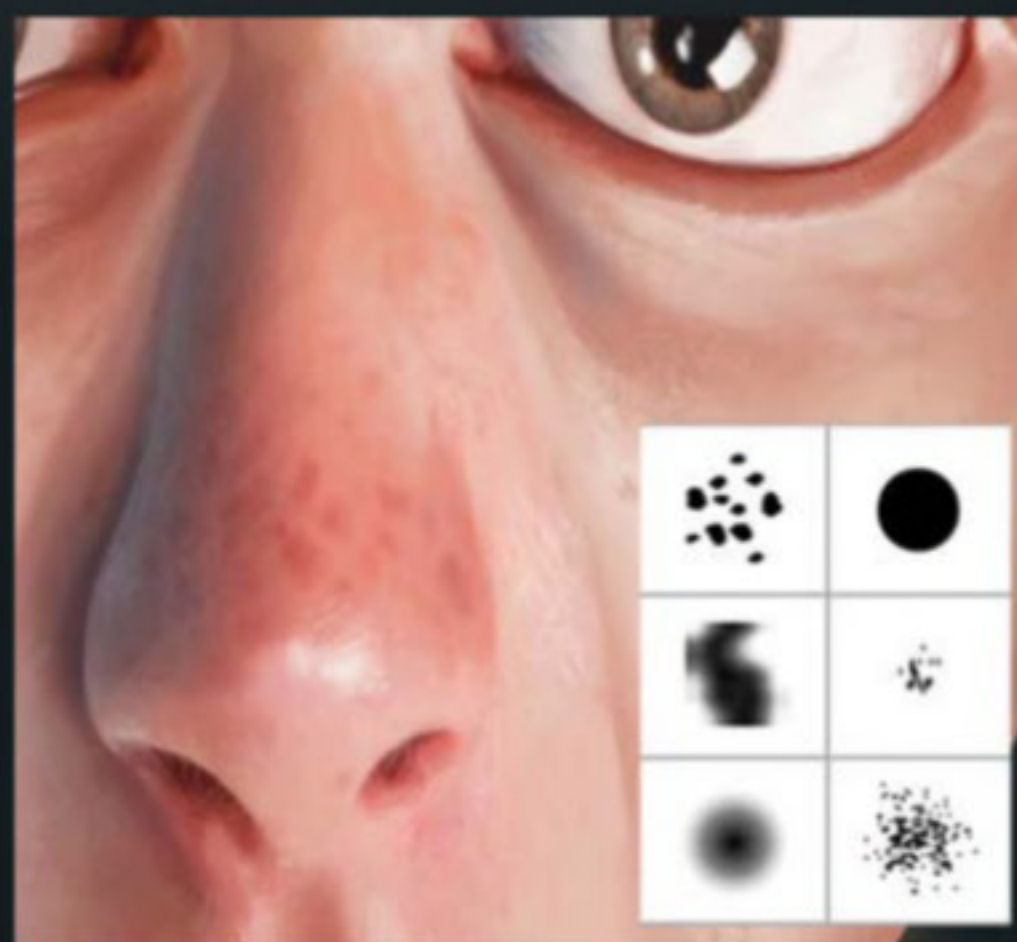
## 04 | ADJUSTMENTS

With the lighting defined, I then started inserting a new layer of details like the skin reflection, teeth and beard. Then, I made some adjustments and continued adding details one layer above the rest, covering the initial sketch lines, overshadowing the corners, and creating the nostrils. I also used a custom brush (with Flow at 30%) to make it easier to create hair and add some details to the eyebrows.



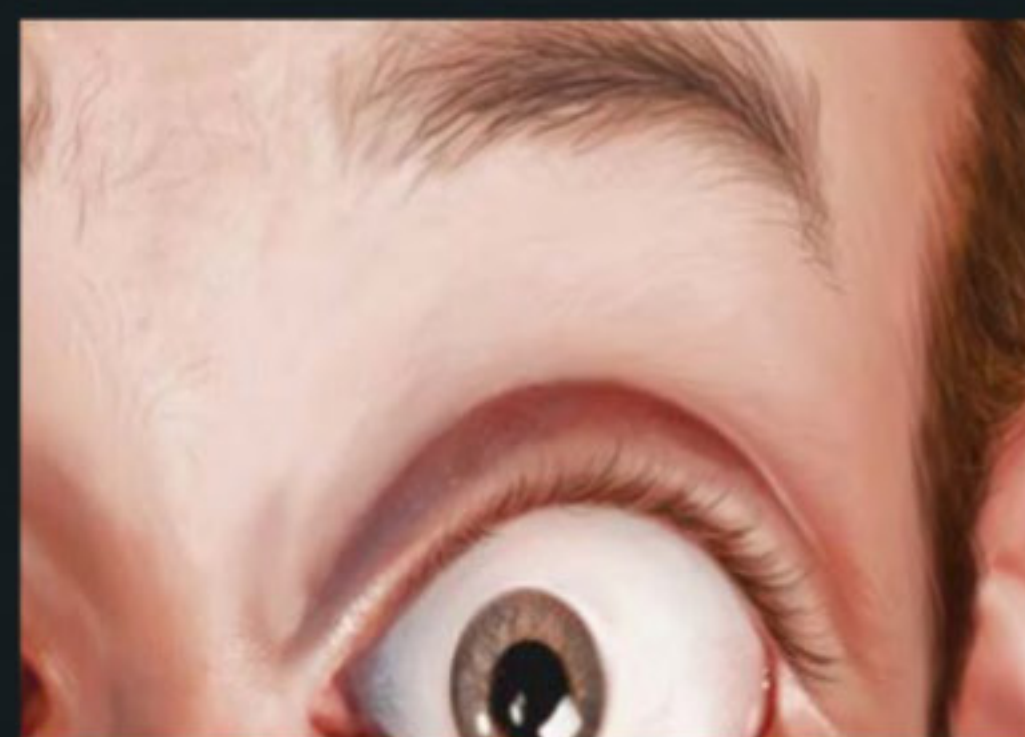
## 05 | DETAILING

With the blocked colours and the illustration already well defined, now it was time to increase the attention to small final details. It was important to set some brushes that would be able to simulate skin textures, spots, pores and add highlights.



## 06 | HAIR AND EYEBROWS

In my workflow, one of the last stages in illustrating is detailing hair and eyelashes. Starting with the same custom brush mentioned earlier, I started painting the hair shadows and highlights. Next, I created a 100% Hardness simple brush to add some hair individually, giving it all an organic look. With the same brush I created eyelashes and made the finishing touches to the eyebrows.



## 07 | BACKGROUND CONTRAST AND COLOUR ADJUSTMENTS

In this case, I specifically chose to add a photo to the background. I went to Image>Adjustments>Curves, and then changed the levels of the contrast and colours to reach the result I was aiming for.



## 08 | ADDING THE PENDULUM

Finally, I added the pendulum illustration, paying special attention to the material reflection that was needed. I then also duplicated the layer and used the Radial Blur filter separated from the pendulum and from the row to create the sensation of movement.



## DEVELOPING THE BACKGROUND

GARCIA TELLS US WHY HE DECIDED TO ADD ON A SPACE ENVIRONMENT-STYLE BACKGROUND TO THE PIECE

I added some details to the shirt collar in a quick way at first, just to give an idea of the structure of it. Then, I decided to make some changes, adding the blue colour for the second light source that comes from the space environment I planned to use as a background. Because the character was being hypnotised, I thought it was a good idea to make it look like he was truly travelling to infinity and beyond.





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OI Pejeta is a leading conservancy fighting against this cruelty. It needs more funds so more rangers and surveillance can be deployed on the ground to save rhinos from this horrible treatment.



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World of Animals magazine takes a stand against these atrocities and is proud to be in partnership with the OI Pejeta Conservancy - 10% of our profits go towards saving rhinos in the fight against poaching



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# WILD ENGLAND

via

Richard Jefferies' AFTER LONDON

PUBLISHED BY ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP MAGAZINE IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE FANTASTICAL LITERATURE TRAVEL AGENCY



# DESIGN A VINTAGE-STYLE TRAVEL POSTER

CREATE A COLOURFUL RETRO TRAVEL POSTER INSPIRED BY AUTUN PURSER'S FANTASTIC TRAVEL DESTINATIONS SERIES

**T**ravel posters have long been used to advertise the delights of distant lands and cities. In the 1940s and 50s, British travel poster design reached its zenith, with the iconic rail and London Transport posters exhorting customers to leave the cities at weekends to enjoy the countryside.

Photoshop is an ideal application for the design of such retro posters. The ability to work up individual elements in isolation, then import and reposition as distinct layers within a composition, makes the fine-tuning of a final image more straightforward than it was for pioneer travel poster artists. Historically, printing technology was partly

responsible for the limited colour palettes employed by many poster artists. This limitation meant that trying to replicate the natural colours of a location was not possible, and that bright, high-contrast colours were often used to depict a scene instead. By setting up Photoshop colour swatches, this approach to colouration can be reproduced.

In this tutorial you will design a poster advertising 'Wild England', an imaginary England introduced in the 1885 novel *After London* by Richard Jefferies. You will learn how to produce block colour elements from sketches and integrate these with text and textures within the Photoshop environment to create effective retro posters.

## DETERMINE LAYOUT AND REQUIRED ELEMENTS

SKETCH A ROUGH POSTER OUTLINE AND BUILD ELEMENTS

### 01 ROUGH LAYOUT SKETCH

You will produce a bold, block-colour travel poster from a number of design elements. You will base your poster on those produced in the 1950s by London Transport. An online archive of these posters is available at [www.ltmcollection.org](http://www.ltmcollection.org). The first stage in designing such a poster is to draw a rough layout sketch from which to work (provided in the source files – 'roughlayouts sketch.psd').



### 03 SKETCH OR TRACE ELEMENT OUTLINES

The elements that make up the poster will be block colour components with a black outline. Depending on your confidence with traditional pen and ink sketching or your access to a stylus/graphics pad, you can either sketch out on paper the element outlines for scanning (step 4), or alternatively load the source photos into Photoshop and produce the outlines there (step 5).

### 02 COLLECT SOURCE PHOTOGRAPHS

Although you are producing a stylised block-colour travel poster for a location from fiction, it is preferable wherever possible to work from life or photographs. In the source files, photographs are provided that were taken specifically based on the rough layout presented in step 1, ('referencephotos' folder). Websites such as [www.deviantart.com](http://www.deviantart.com) are also useful sources of source material.



#### OUR EXPERT

**AUTUN PURSER**

[www.apillustration.co.uk](http://www.apillustration.co.uk)  
@apillustration

Autun Purser is a freelance graphic designer best known for his range of colourful travel posters, advertising the delights of locations from fantasy and science-fiction novels.



#### SOURCE FILES

All design elements used in the poster are available for free download via FileSilo, as black and white and coloured elements. Also provided are the source photographs used in designing these.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

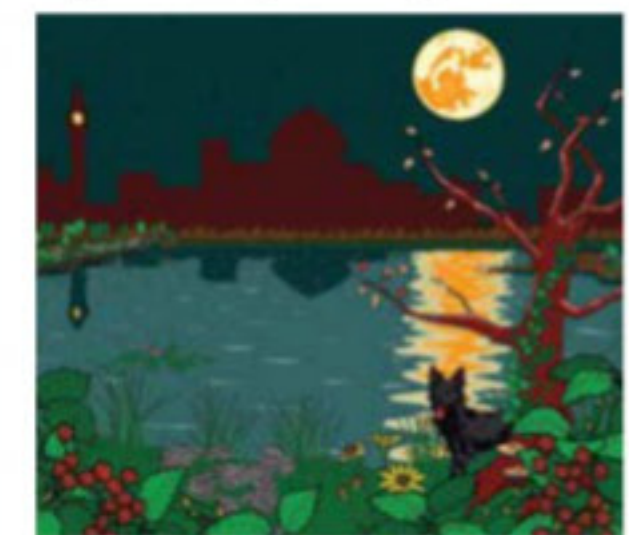
FROM SKETCH TO POSTER



Progress 1: Rough layout sketch



Progress 2: Colour and import foreground layers

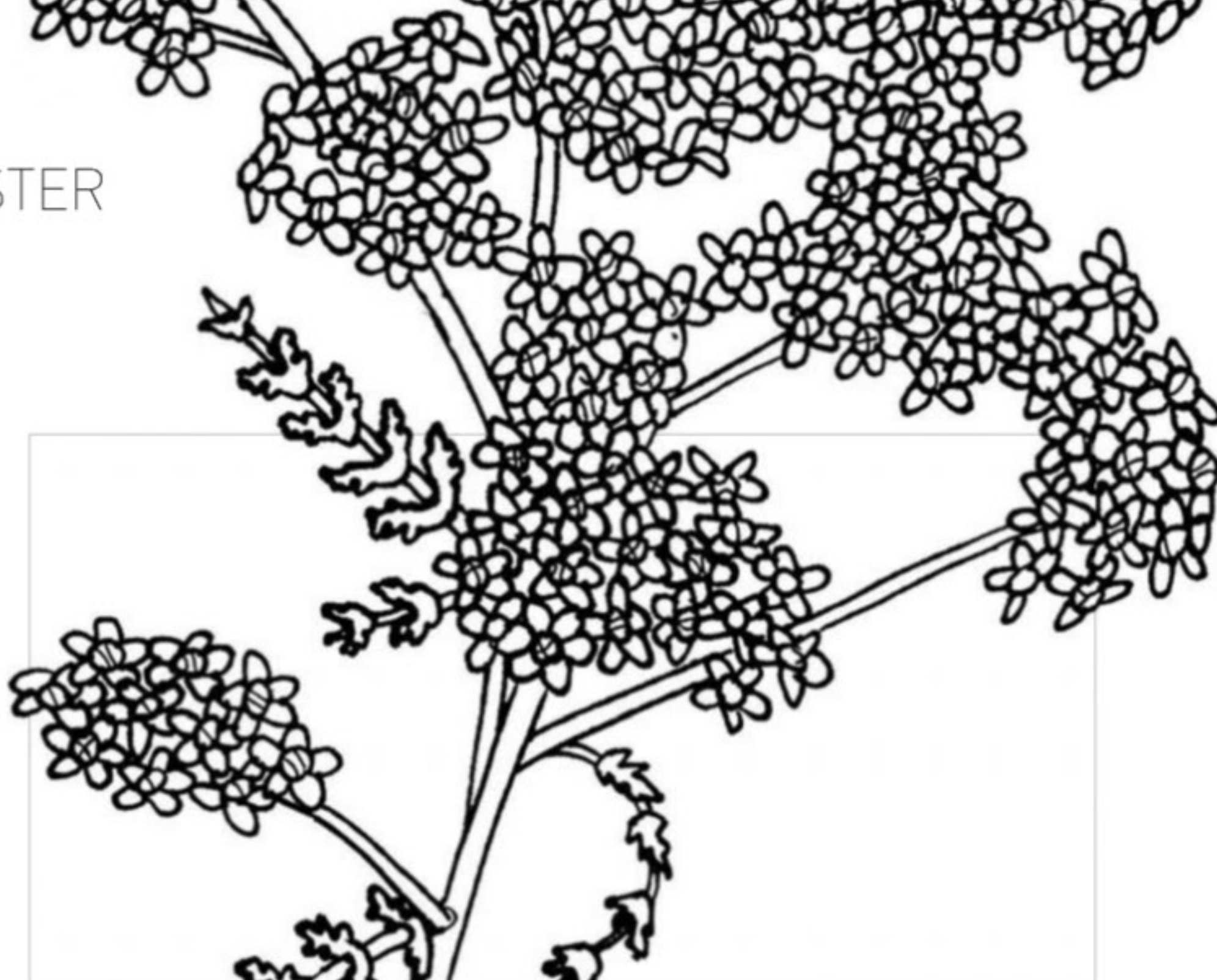


Progress 3: Close-up inspection



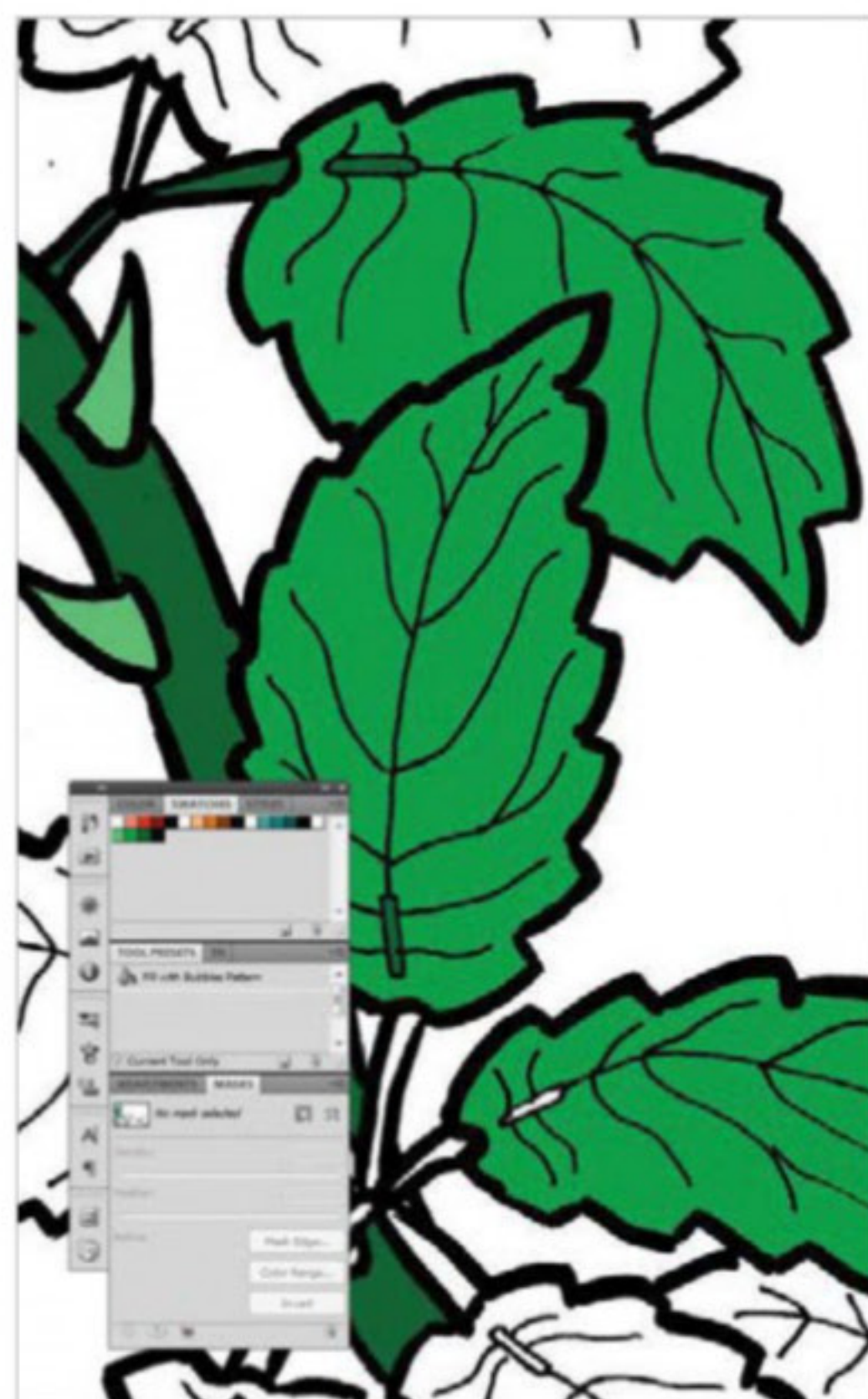


**04 | SKETCHING AND SCANNING ELEMENT OUTLINES**  
The rough layout in step 1 shows the River Thames surrounded by encroaching vegetation, as described in the source novel. Each of the various elements in the design can be drawn separately with pen and ink directly onto paper then scanned into Photoshop. Try to divide the elements into discrete areas that may be colour-filled with the Paint Bucket tool later in the tutorial. When scanning, scan as black and white images, with no greyscale. This ensures striking element outlines.

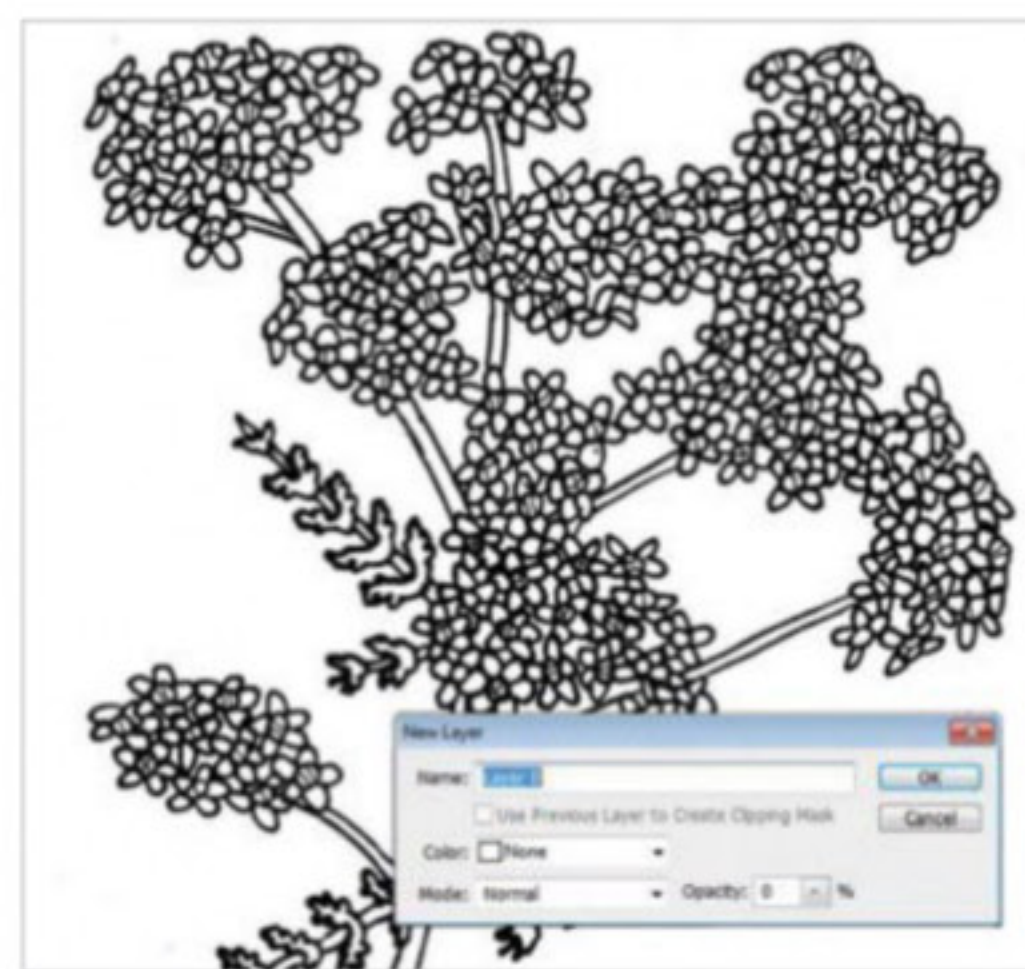


**05 | CREATE ELEMENT OUTLINES WITHIN PHOTOSHOP**  
If you prefer, you may create the black and white outlines of the image elements within Photoshop. Load the source photos into Photoshop (from File>Open>'referencephotos' or internet search) then create a new layer (Layer>New>Layer). On this new layer, trace directly around the feature of interest with the Pencil tool – a stylus or graphics pad may be preferred. Try to leave no gaps in an element outline, so the regions of the element can be filled with the Paint Bucket tool later in the tutorial. When the outline is drawn, delete the source image layer and save.

**06 | SET UP SWATCH**  
Commonly, retro travel posters use a limited colour palette to unify design and make it more eye-catching. At this stage you need to think of a colour scheme and set up a swatch to keep organised. Wherever possible, colours from this swatch should be used, particularly for large poster elements. To add to the swatch palette, select a foreground colour (using either Color Picker or Eyedropper) and select New Swatch (Swatches>New Swatch). A swatch set may be loaded from the source files ('retroposter.aso').



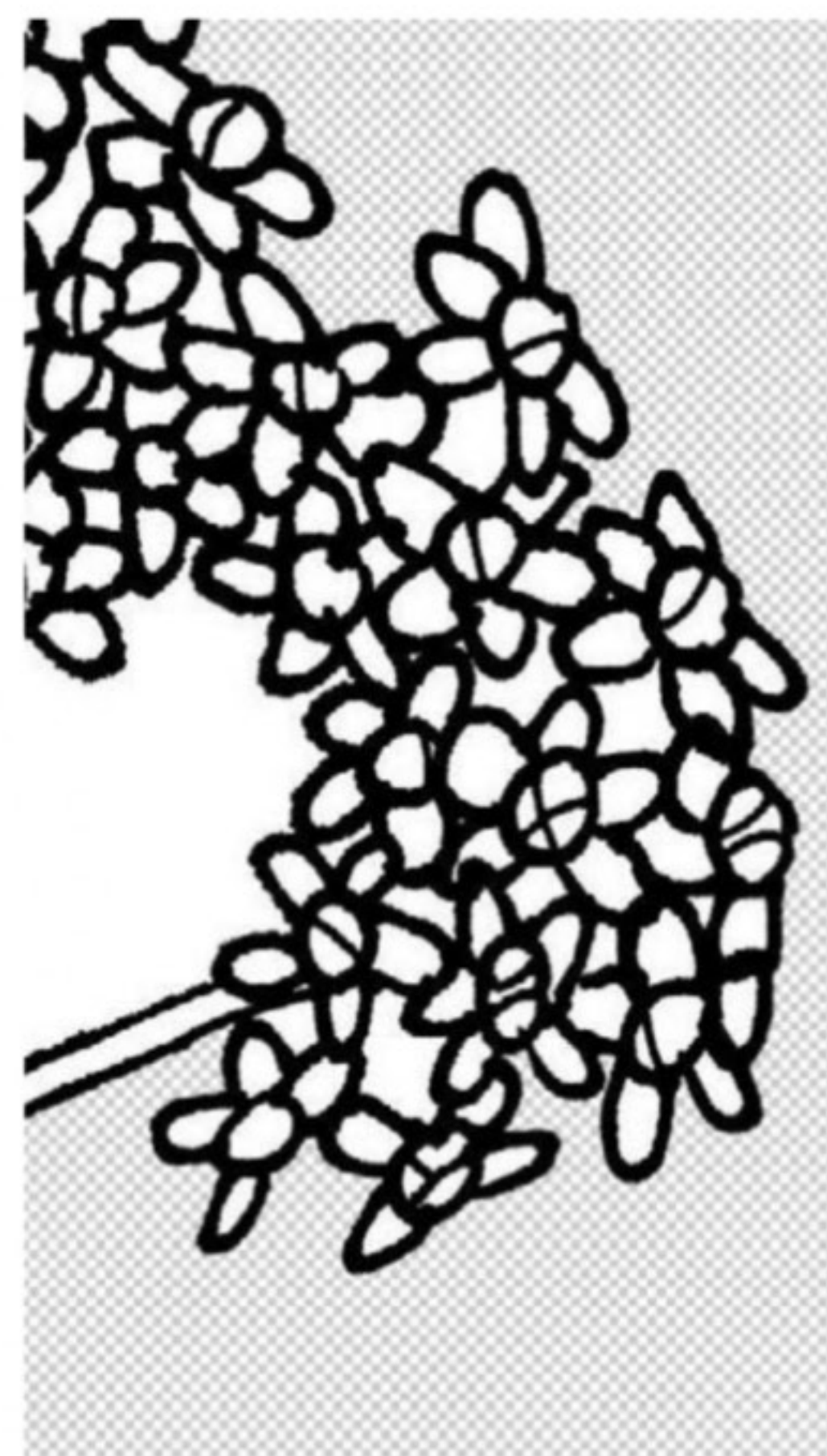
**07 | CUT ELEMENT OUTLINES FROM SCANS**  
After scanning the sketches of the various poster elements as black and white files, these sketches need to be cropped to size and copied into a new CMYK file so they may be coloured. At this stage, it is important to ensure that areas of white in an image can be removed, to allow the element to be layered into the main poster design. To do this, double-click on the Background layer in the new CMYK image and set Opacity to 0%. Then save the image as a PSD file.



■ QUICK TIP

When designing individual elements for retro posters, it is important to not be overly concerned with achieving photorealism. Complex subjects such as overgrown tree trunks should be simplified where possible, with simple repetitious geometric shapes used to illustrate ivy for example, and just a few lines used to indicate bark texture.

**08 | REFINE ELEMENT OUTLINES**  
The next step is to make sure that areas of each element can be later filled with the Paint Bucket tool, and that all areas of white are removed from the element. First, zoom in on the image and inspect it for gaps in the black outline. If any gaps are present, use the Pencil tool and a black foreground colour to correct this. Next, use the Magic Wand tool to select areas of the image that will not contain colour (ie between the stems of plants) and delete these.



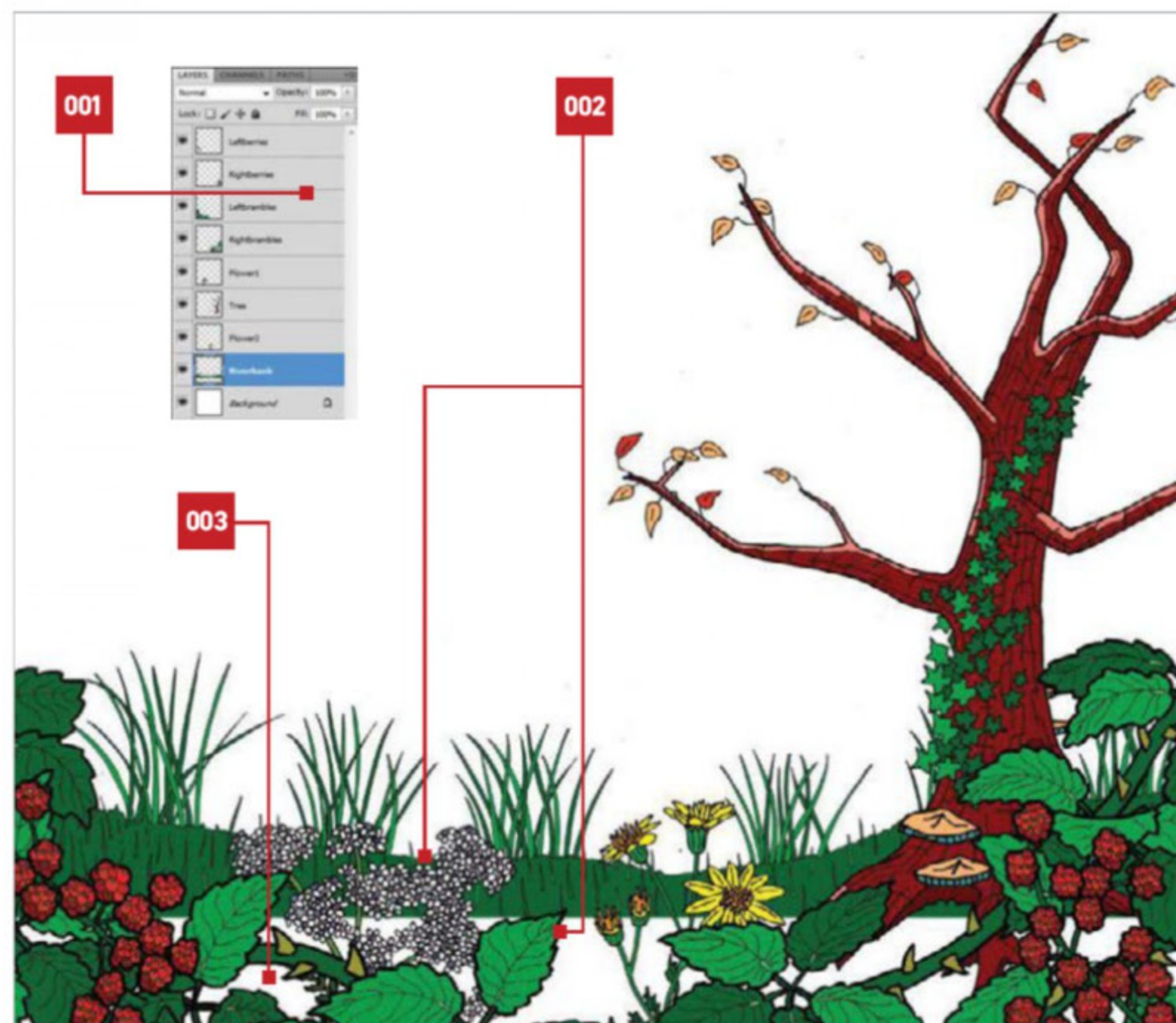


## COLOUR AND ALIGN ELEMENTS

COLOUR COMPONENTS AND ARRANGE DESIGN ELEMENTS

### 09 COLOUR AND IMPORT FOREGROUND LAYERS

It is time to colour each foreground element file in individually and then save as coloured versions (if you prefer, use those already coloured in the source files – File>Open>'colouredcomponents'>'foreground\_elements'). Open each file in turn and fill in block colour using the Paint Bucket. Select Contiguous and set Tolerance to 0 in the toolbar. Copy each element onto the 'element\_baselayer.psd' stack and reposition.



**001 | LAYOUT ORDER**  
The most logical way to order layers is to place the most distant from the viewer at the top

**002 | LINE THICKNESS**  
When producing the design element sketches, consider where the element will be positioned. Use a thicker pen for foreground features

**003 | UNFILLED SPACE**  
Design elements may not cover the foreground region fully. Insert a new layer and use the Paint Bucket to fill these



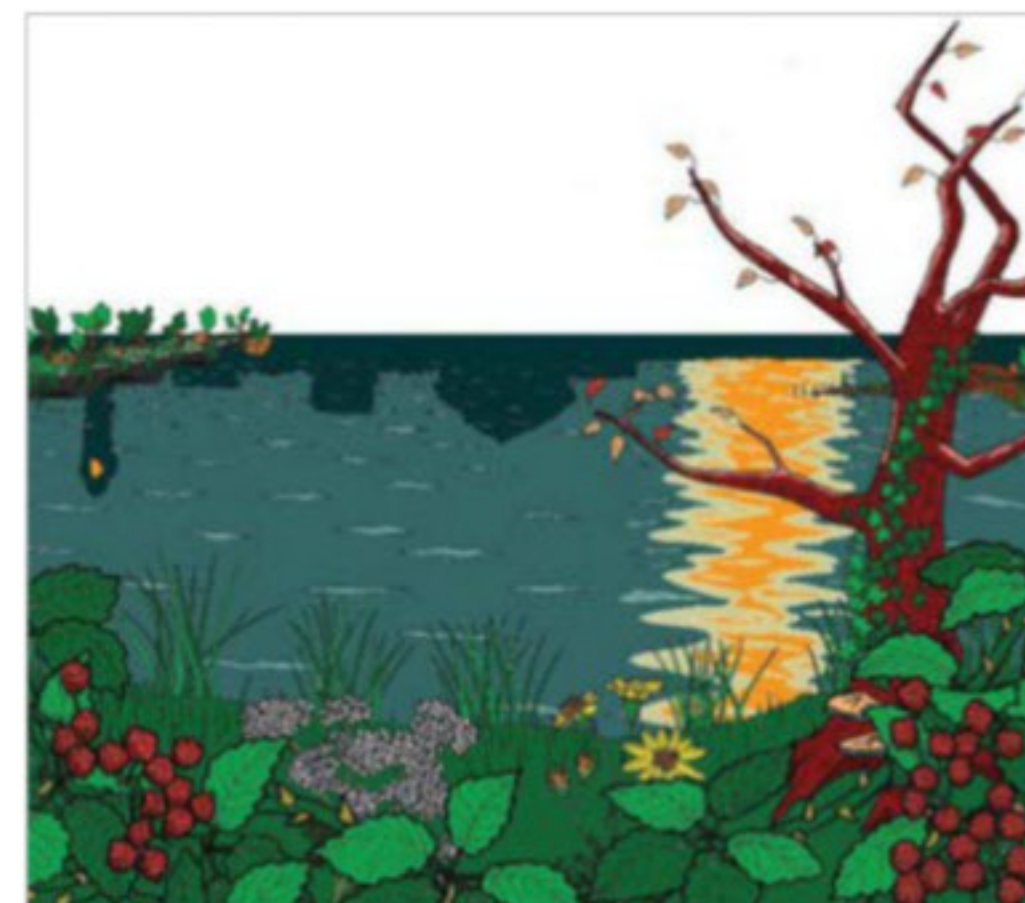
### 11 ALIGN BACKGROUND FEATURES

After colouring the elements making up the background section of the design, they must be opened into the layer stack and positioned (or use those provided; File>Open>'colouredcomponents'>'background\_elements'). In some cases, these background layers will be above middle-ground layers, for example the reed layers. Given that these background elements are rather small, if the black element outline regime is maintained in this area of the image, a difficult mass of lines would result. Replace the black lines with colours from the swatch selection. Move the 'skyline' layer and middle section 'Thames' into alignment.



### 12 SET BACKGROUND COLOUR AND ADD FEATURES

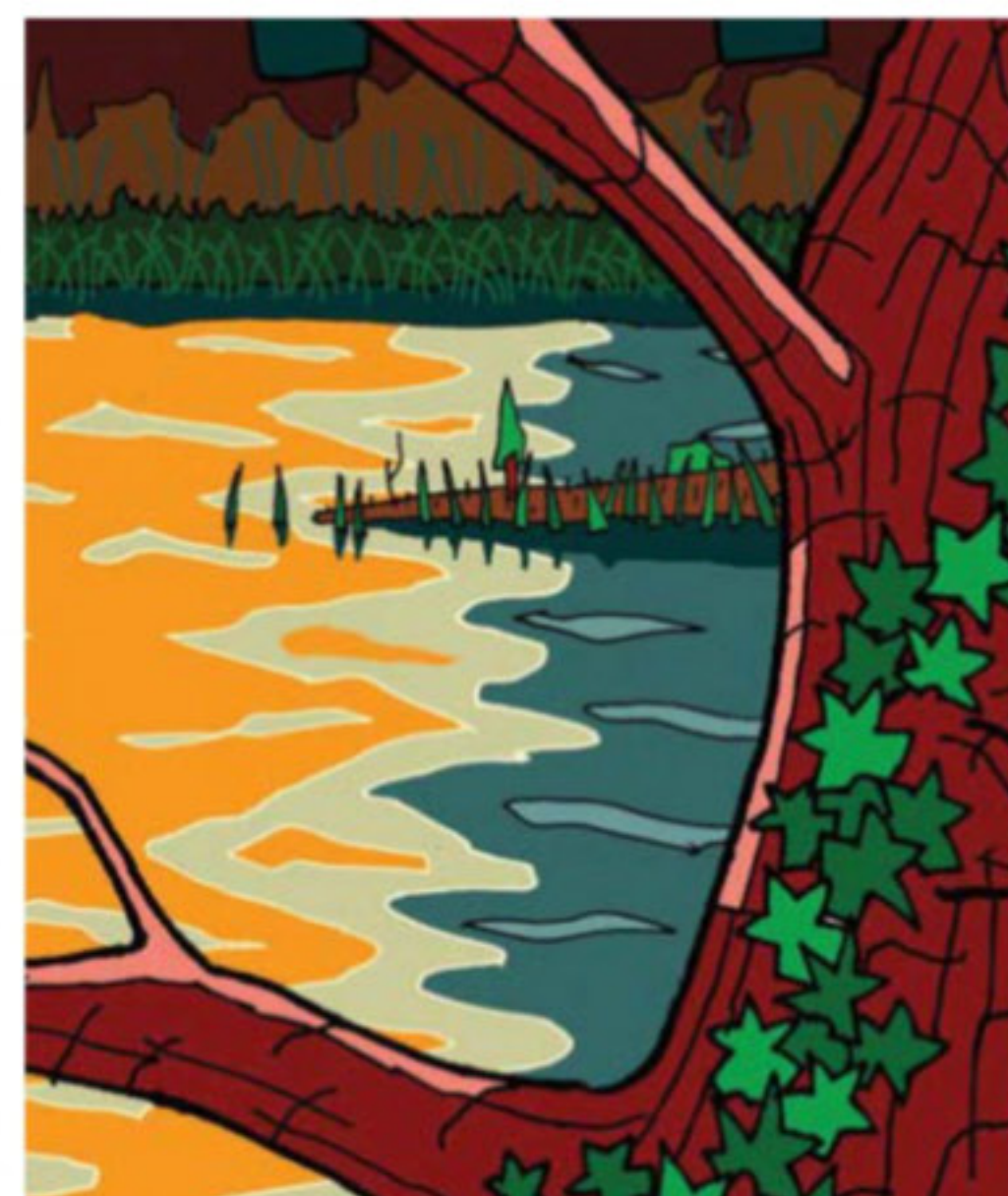
The main design is near completion. With the moon full and low in the sky, an evening or dawn sky colouration is desired. Select the Background layer and fill with an appropriate colour using the Paint Bucket tool. Following this, further design elements can be added to the image, such as those provided (File>Open>'colouredcomponents'>'additional\_elements'). These images may require resizing depending on where they will be placed. Try to avoid an overly busy design; retro travel posters are often minimal in layout with large, very uniform regions as well as detailed areas.



### 10 THE MIDDLE REGION

After colouring the middle region design elements, bring these into the layout as layers (or use those provided; File>Open>'colouredcomponents'>'middleground\_elements'). These layers should be positioned below the foreground layers. For now there is no requirement to position the design elements in exactly the final positions; each layer can be removed or moved as required throughout the design process.

“ Try to avoid an overly busy design; retro travel posters are often minimal in layout ”



### 13 INSERT SHADOWS

Some of the elements included shaded sections. Others, such as the bridge across the river and the small island, did not. These should be manually added by zooming in on the area and carefully outlining a shadowed region in an appropriate colour with the Pencil tool. When doing this, consider the relative position of the moon (the most significant source of light in the image). Place the shadows directly on the layer casting the shadow or on the layer underneath, whichever is most appropriate.



## FROM ILLUSTRATION TO POSTER

INTEGRATING THE TEXT INTO THE DESIGN

### 14 | ADD STARS OR OTHER AERIAL FEATURES

The sky can be made livelier with the depiction of flying animals, clouds or a few stars. If clouds are to be used, they must appear to float and not sit as solid, lumpy expanses of colour. A simple technique to add stars is to set the Pencil tool to a particular thickness and place dots of appropriate colour directly onto the Background layer. Stars should increase in number vertically from the horizon and also with distance from the moon. This will also help guide the eye around the design.



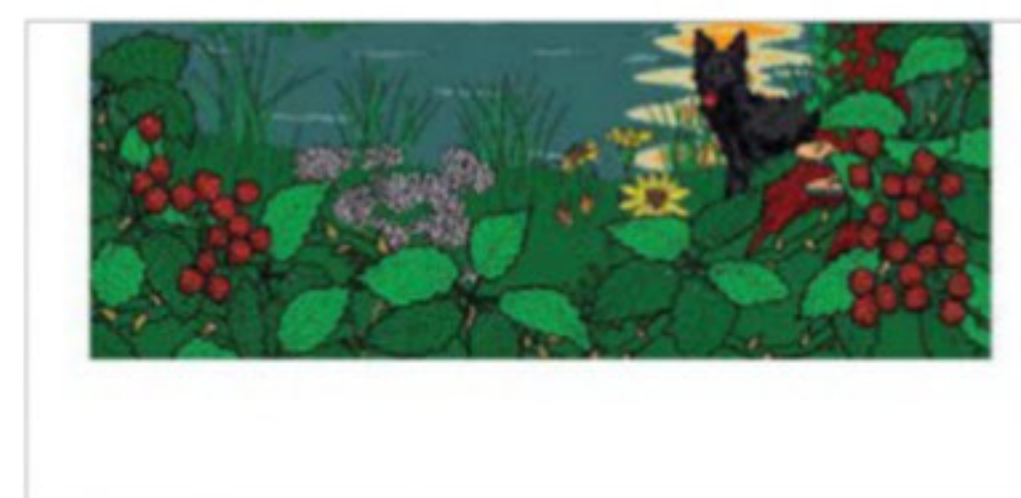
### 15 | CLOSE-UP INSPECTION

The poster art is now near completion. Commonly when working with so many individual design elements, small areas of white background may remain or imperfections in the original scanning might litter the image. These now need to be deleted or replaced with the correct colours. To do this, zoom in to 100% scale and scan across the whole design, fixing any problems you may find with the Paint Bucket, Pencil or Magic Wand tools.



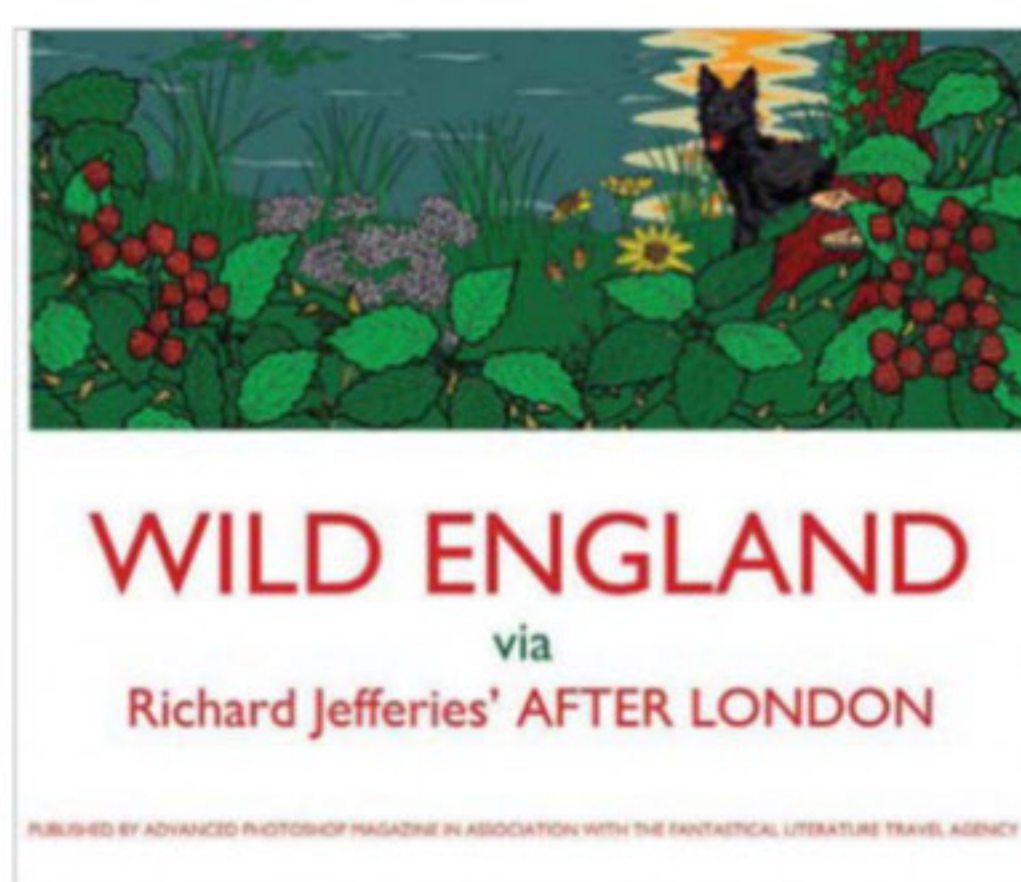
### 16 | IMPORT ART ONTO BACKGROUND

After checking for any errors in the art, it is time to import the full design onto the poster. For the artwork here, you should set up a new CMYK file of 600 dpi and a size of Width 13800 x Height 18600 pixels. After doing this, select the full art layer from the file you have been working on and go to File>Copy Merged to grab all the layers. Paste this into the new file and position the image so that the top and side margins are equal. Text will be inserted at the bottom of the image.



### 17 | ADDING TEXT

A few lines of minimal text are common on retro travel posters. Usually one or two fonts are used, perhaps with several changes in font size. Use bright, bold text to advertise the location, with smaller text making some description of the place, or making some sort of joke – 'Skegness, it's so bracing' is a famous example. Here the Gill Sans font is used, heavily employed in the mid-20th Century. A free version by Jonathan Paterson is available here: <http://www.fontspace.com/jonathan-paterson/london-tube>. After adding text, look again at design and make any further touch-ups.



### 18 | AGE THE PAPER

The design is finished, but to give the design a more retro look you can now age the paper. Download a paper texture from the internet ('Paper\_texture\_v5' from [bashcorpo.deviantart.com](http://bashcorpo.deviantart.com) used here). Resize this to match the poster size and import as the top layer in your poster stack. Next, Ctrl/right-click on the layer and select Blending Options. Experiment with blend modes and opacities – Multiply is often satisfactory; here Linear Burn is used. Any unwanted texture areas can be selected with the Marquee tool and Edit>Fill with Content-Aware and 100% Opacity selected.



#### ■ LINE THICKNESS AND COLOUR

When sketching and scanning the artwork for the elements for retro travel posters, it is important to aim at using just a few distinct line thicknesses in the final image. If you sketch and scan at a range of resolutions and sizes, the result within the final design is not cohesive. Thicker foreground lines can aid in creating depth. Line colour can also be changed (try filling black outlines with the Paint Bucket tool). Here the black dog outline is replaced by dark blue so features can be picked out. The reflections in the water are outlined in white, indicating brightness.



#### ■ QUICK TIP

The purpose of a travel poster is to grab the attention of a possibly busy commuter or someone flicking through a magazine, and transmit a short burst of information swiftly. Text should be minimal and the design should clearly show what is on offer. Here, it's an area of wild countryside, a common motif in vintage London Transport posters.



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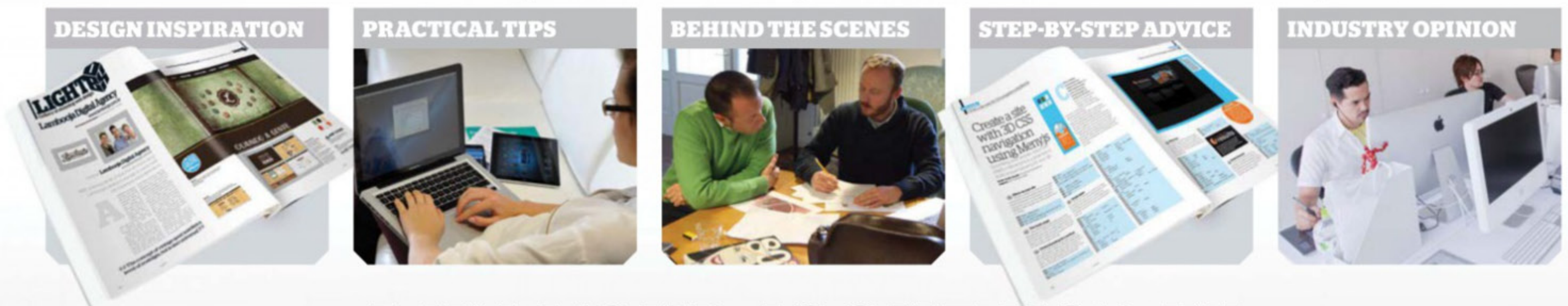


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**TITUS LUNTER**

[www.tituslunter.com](http://www.tituslunter.com)

Lunter is a professional freelance concept artist for the games industry. He paints and learns with the philosophy that every artwork is a struggle and should teach you something new. For him, it's not only about creating epic pictures but about struggling and improving.





# FANTASY MATTE PAINTING

TITUS LUNTER SHOWS HOW TO CREATE A SCENE ON AN EPIC SCALE WITH A SENSE OF EERIE GRANDEUR

A fantasy landscape should feel grand and epic. Every image is different and is constructed differently, but there are a few things that always stay the same. Scale, atmosphere and colour treatment are the most important ones to think about on a technical level and these can be worked on in any order depending on your own taste. The other important element is story, but let's start with scale.

Creating a grand scene depends almost entirely on scale, and scale needs elements to create comparisons, so paint things viewers will recognise

like people or birds. The smaller you make them, the bigger the scale of the scene, but remember that the detail increases as well. Working with texture brushes with high noise or scatter values is a nice way of putting this in quickly. Experiment in greyscale and then think about atmosphere. Atmosphere works very well with scale – in fact, they're very much linked to each other! Sometimes scale and detail just aren't enough to make the scene work, and this is where atmosphere kicks in. Try blending colours and pushing certain features into the background. For big landscapes, the closer an

element is to the horizon, the more desaturated it is and the less contrast it will have. Remember, to achieve convincing depth, place dark elements at the front, light at the back.

The fantasy touch can be created by adding objects like glowing crystals, wisps of energy, fantasy architecture or a combination of all of these, and it's this magical touch that will make up the story. You want to leave people wondering what's happening and have them imagine their own narrative in the scene. A good landscape painting always leaves room for a good story. ▶



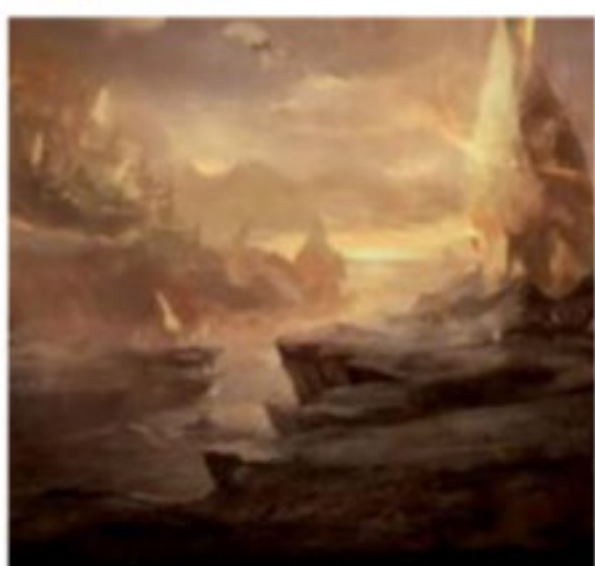
## WORK IN PROGRESS CREATING ATMOSPHERE



Progress 1: Basic sketch



Progress 2: Increase the scale

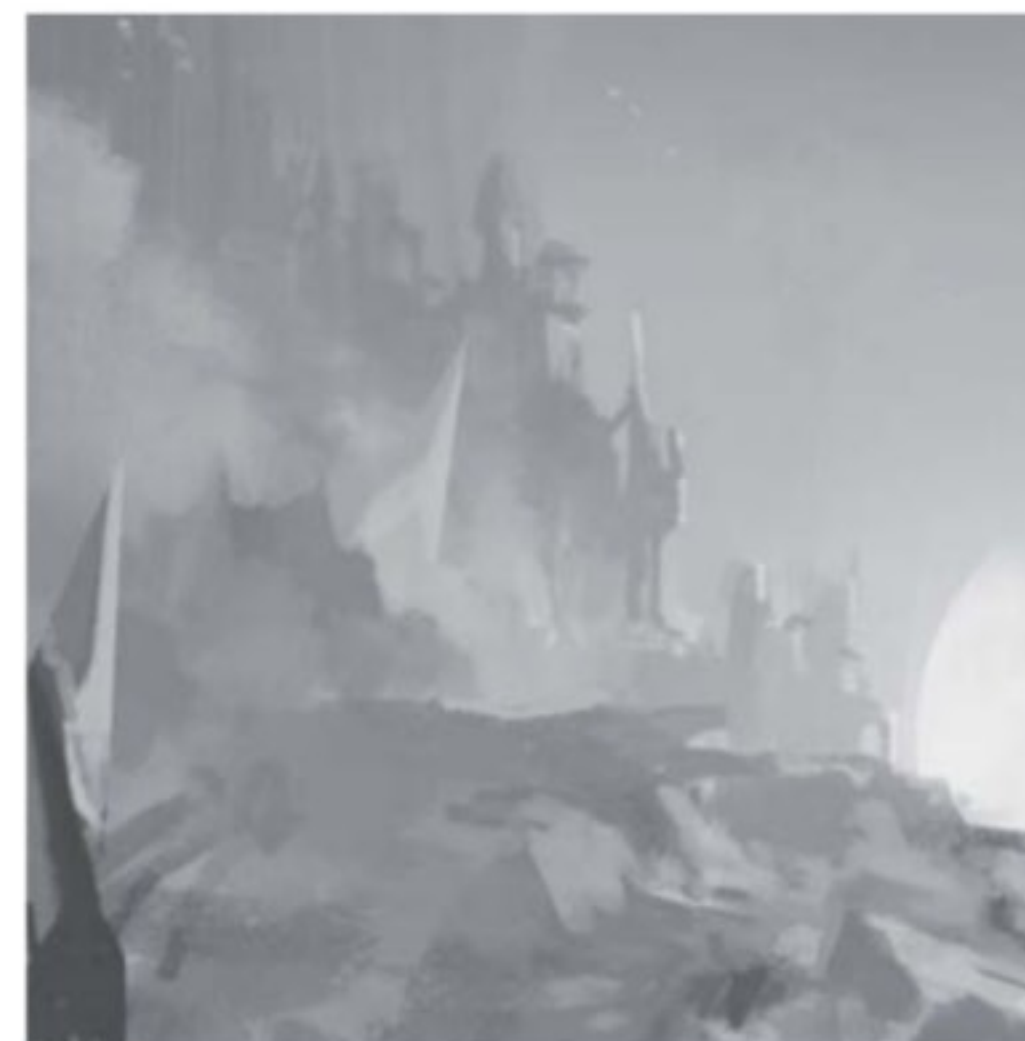


Progress 3: Final touches



### 01 SKETCH VALUES

To start your image, create a quick black-and-white sketch. Keep it very loose as you might want to change things around later. Just go for the basic outline of the land and lighting to give you a rough idea of the values.



### 02 THE MYSTERY

This painting will have a mysterious city in the background. They can be tricky to paint, so take your time to work this up to a decent standard. Look at references of cities in the distance and observe how they become a mass of solid shapes.

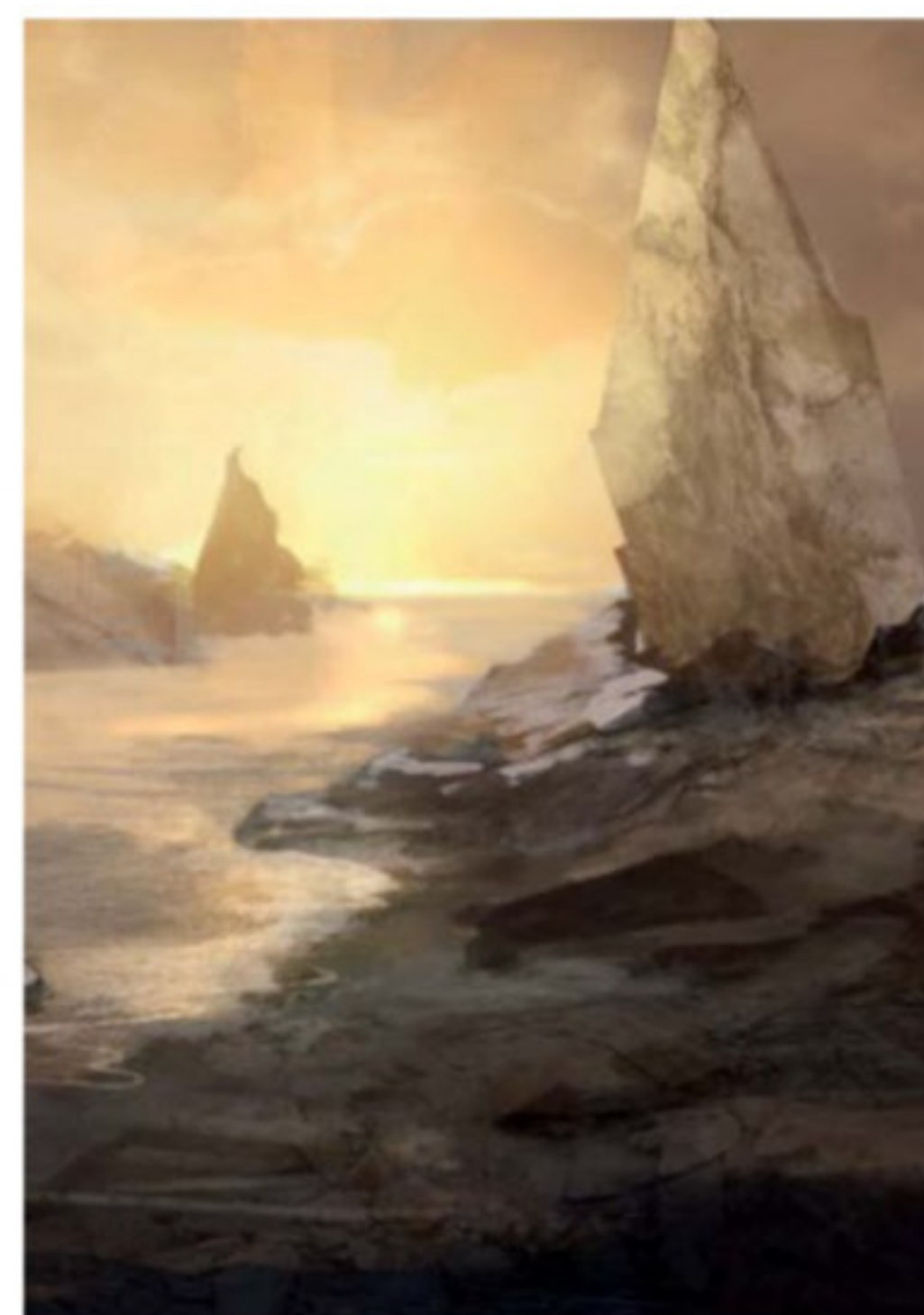
#### QUICK TIP

Everything you paint has to reference the real world in some way, even if it's alien. This makes sure people can recognise what you are painting. Using real-world textures is a solid base for this – if you understand something, you know when you can deviate from it.



### 03 TRY OUT COLOURS

A big part of the story and mood of the painting comes from the colour, so rough that in on a new layer to get a feel for the atmosphere. Play with the Hue/Saturation adjustment to get the feel of different colours. Dreamy scenes often have orange and pink tones. Using complementary colours is good for shadow tones because it makes lights and darks stand out.



### 04 PHOTOS AND TEXTURE

Blocking in materials by using some photographs helps with setting up the scene and developing perspective and scale as well as base texture. Always use your own, a purchased or free-to-use stock image, or ask permission of the photographer before going ahead!

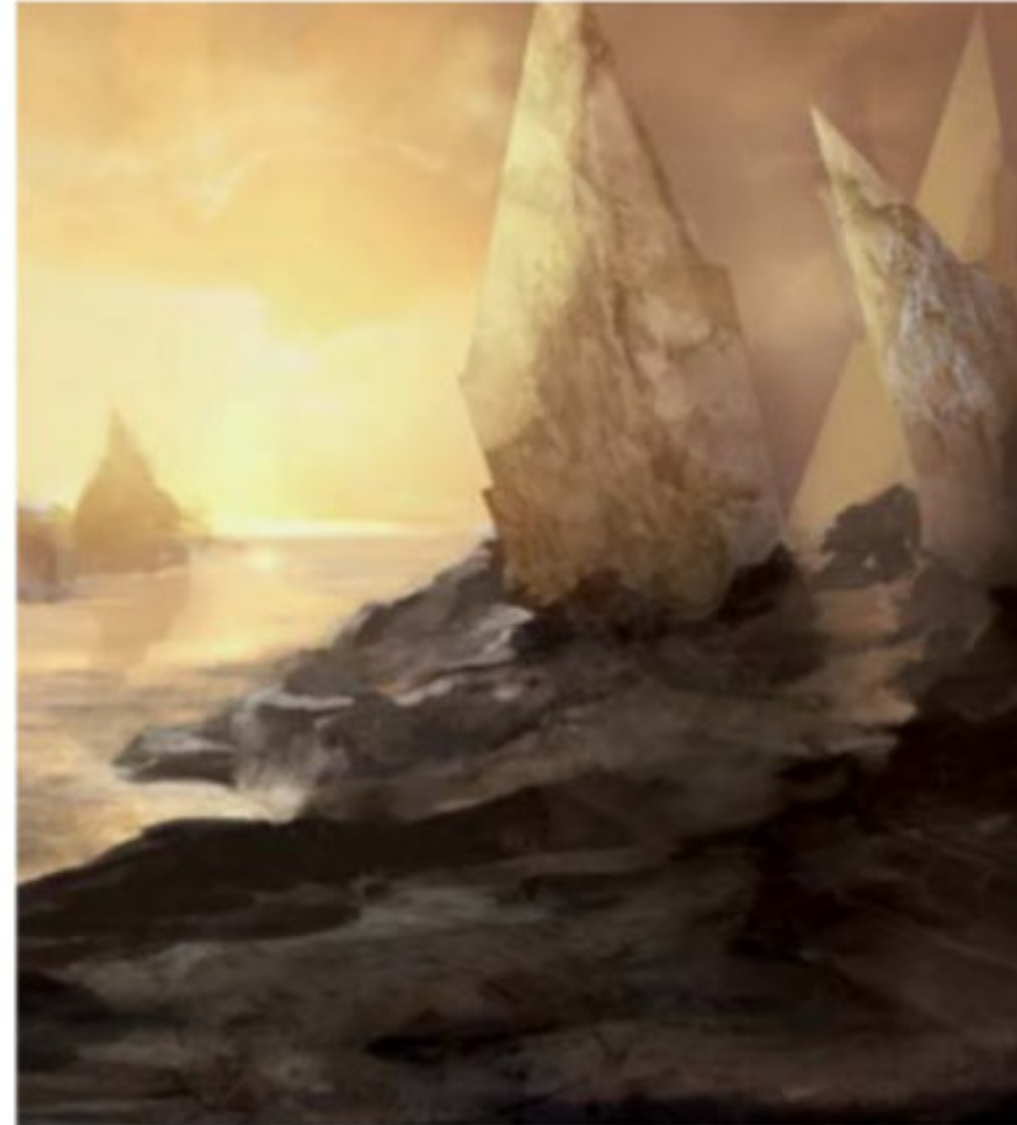


#### ■ QUICK TIP

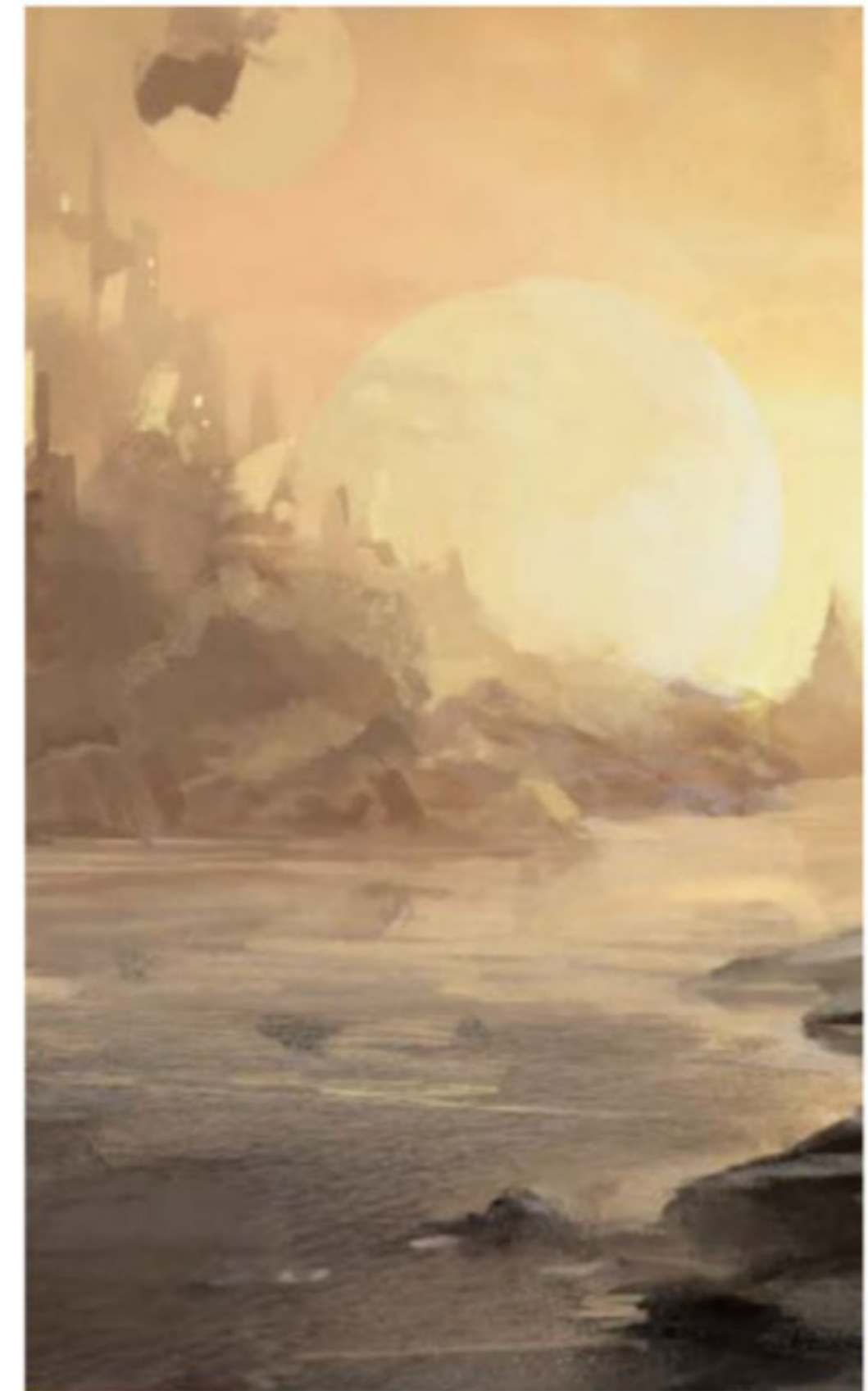
As an artist you have to be flexible, not only as a person but in your paintings as well. Taking critiques can be difficult but it will help you in the end. Approach your painting in the same way; don't be afraid to change it up and make it better.



**05 THE PUSH** Try putting some clouds into the sky and push the foreground tones. Maybe it needs to be darker or could use some more texture? Be critical of your work. At this stage you're looking for the feel of the scene to be right.



**06 DREAMY WARMTH** Make the scene more dreamlike by adding some red into the mix. Experiment with the Color Balance adjustment and try different things. Be bold and use masks to highlight certain areas only so that you can adjust selectively – mask out the main crystals, for example, to work just on the land, sea and sky.



**07 THE MOONS** Nothing sells fantasy better than a few moons. Maybe one of them has been damaged in an attack? This can help with the story – perhaps this is where the crystals have come from?

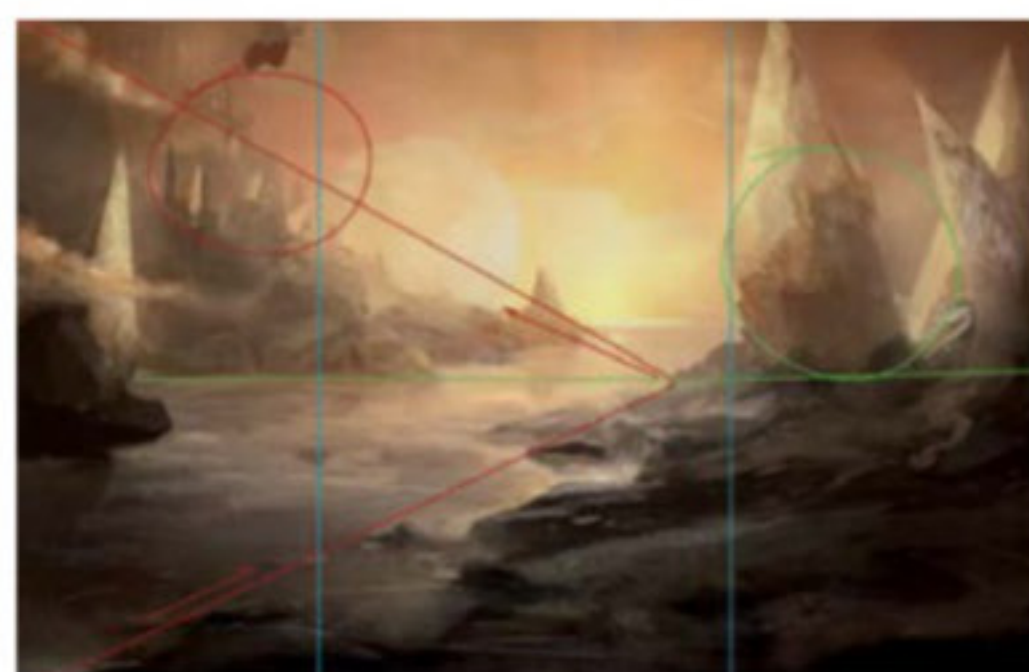


**08 CONTRAST** The image is looking a bit too flat, so at this stage you can try bumping the contrast to emphasise that epic depth. Remember, though, never to use full black for your shading. More accurate deep-shadow tones are purples, greens and browns.



**09 PUSH THE SCALE** The scene didn't feel epic enough once values and colour were in, so let's make it bigger! Never be afraid to change things around and improve your image – in this case, the grandiose scale was boosted to reinforce the size of this place to the viewer.





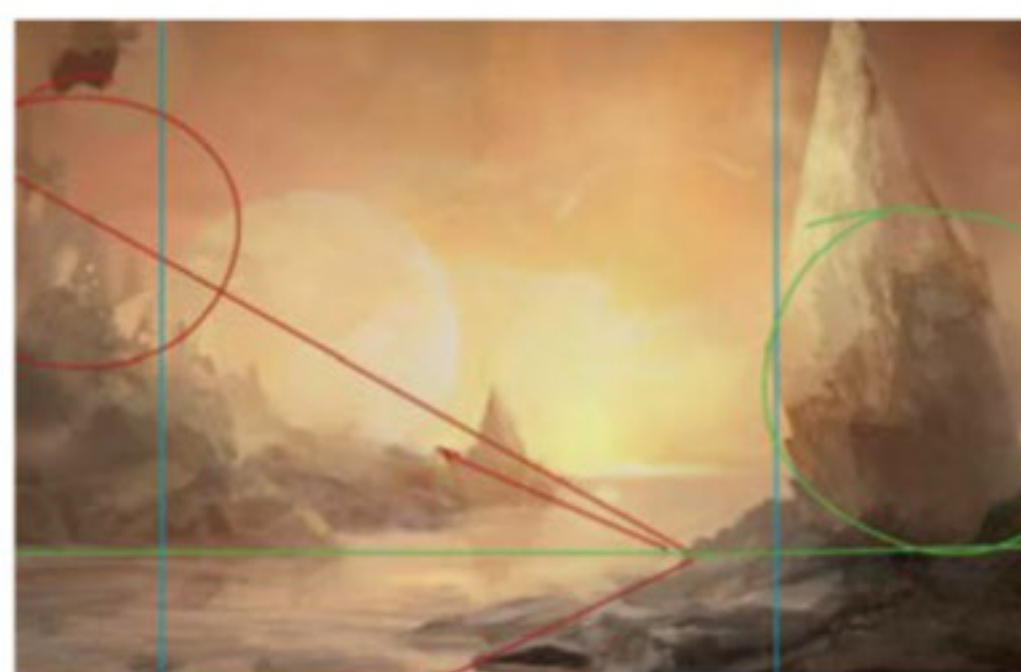
**10 | COMPOSITIONAL CHECKS**  
Always check your composition throughout the painting process. Make sure you have a nice divide and force the viewer to look where you want them to by using points and counterpoints. Here the city and main crystal perform that job.

**13 | CORRECTIONS**  
After you've worked up the major parts, give some love to the areas which you haven't worked on a lot and start putting in a few more colour corrections. All the new additions might have changed the colours quite a bit.

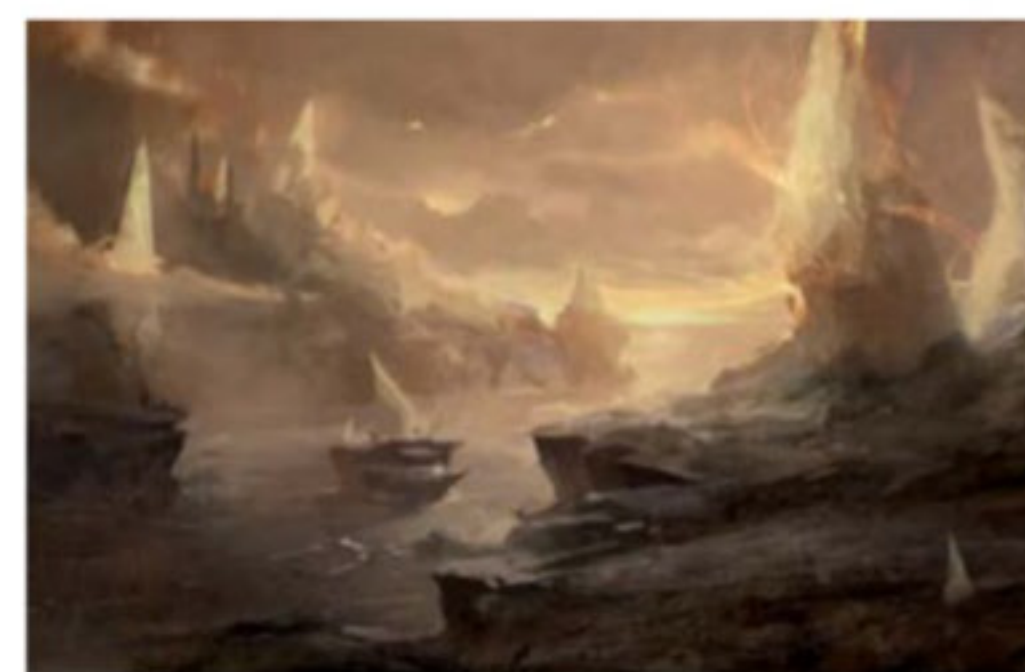


### ■ QUICK TIP

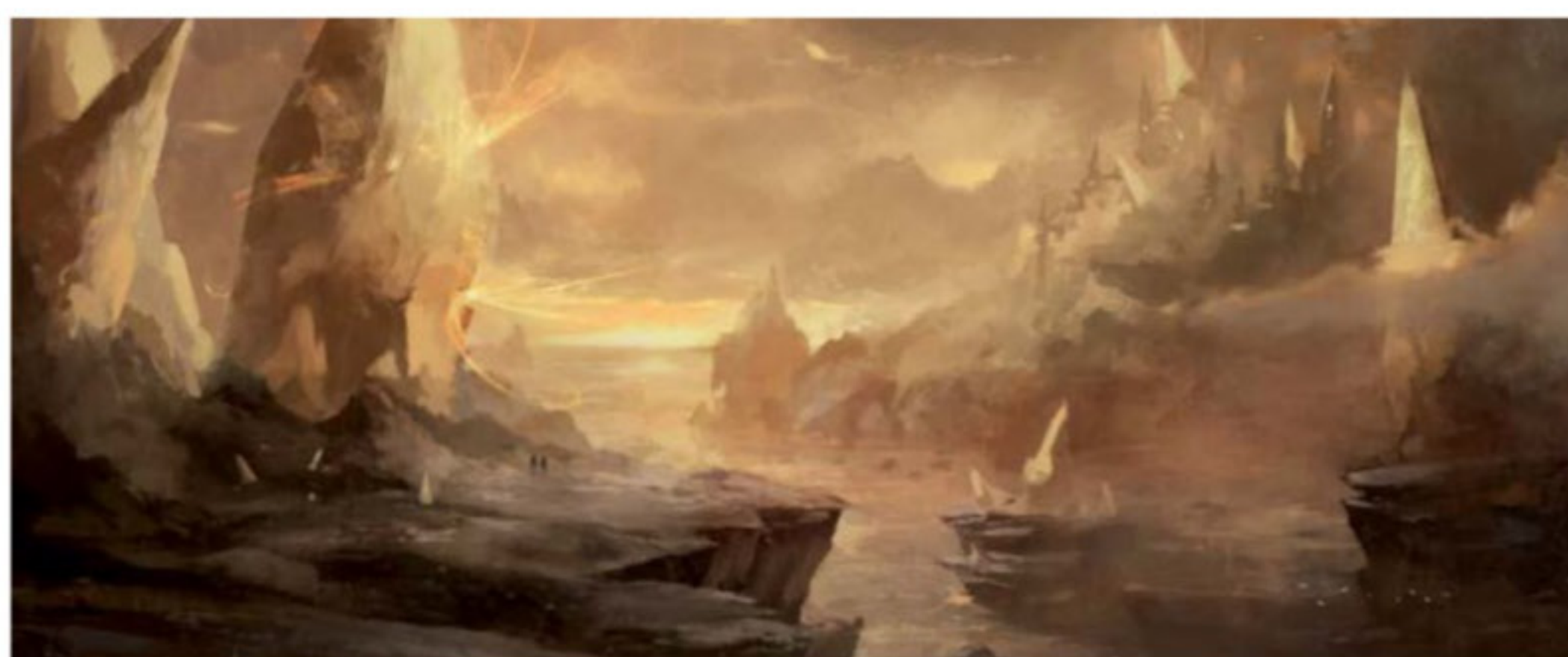
It's very important to set your expectations based on your personal skills. Painting is hard work and takes years to master, so don't get discouraged if it isn't perfect! Keep practising, ask for input from others and listen to what people have to say.



**11 | THE CLOSE-UP**  
Compositions need to work on every level, so zoom in and check if it still works within the main focal area. Think about where you want the viewer to look and how they get there. Here the point of the crystal and the shape of the inlet channel draw the eye up to the city.

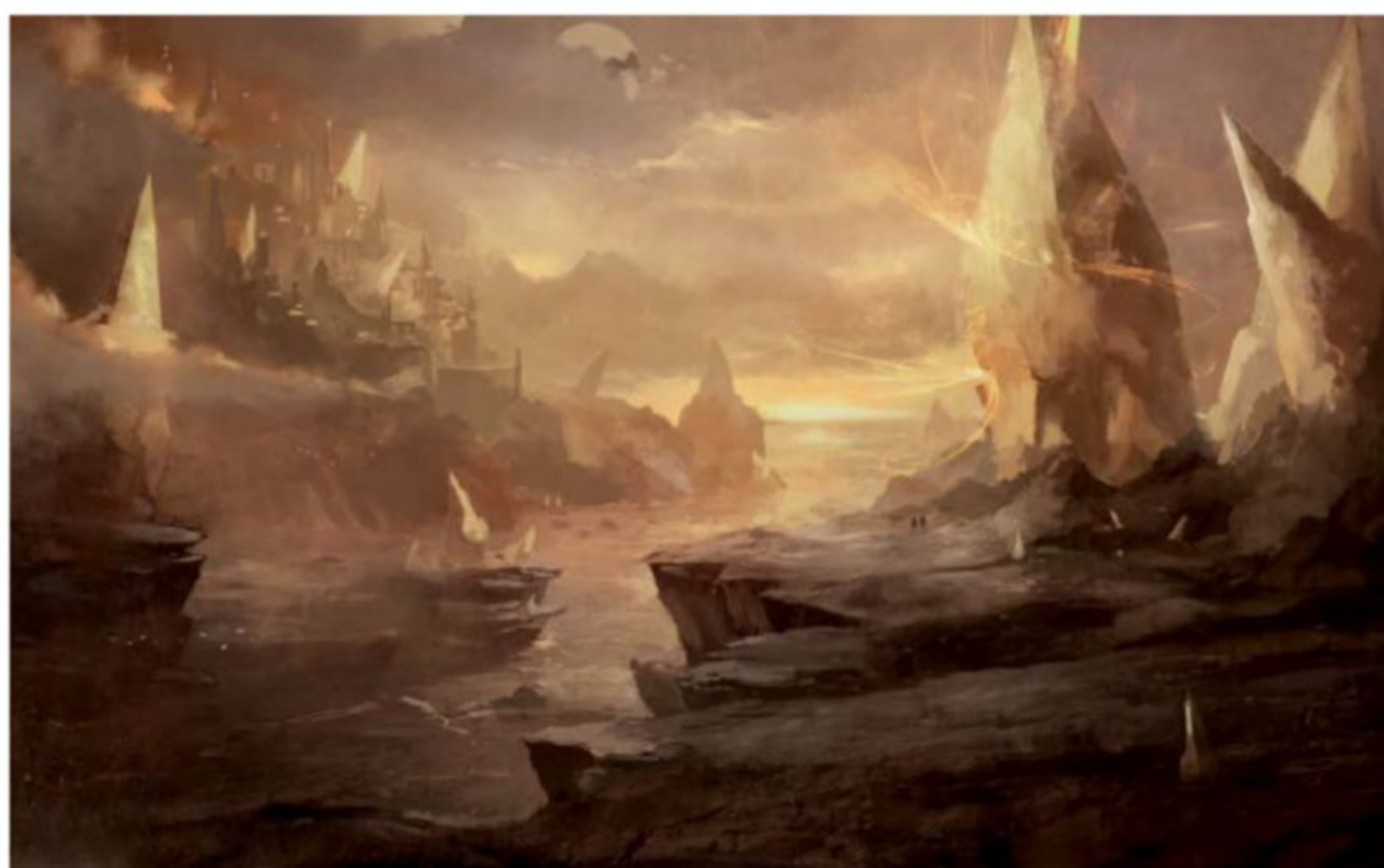


**12 | DEVELOP THE RENDERING**  
When the composition works, just start working on the image. Start rendering and enjoy a casual part of the painting process. Move around rather than focusing on one part, otherwise you'll unbalance the image before you've finished.



**14 | FLIP AND CHECK**  
Keeping a fresh perspective is very important, so this is something you should be doing throughout the entire painting process. Flip your image back and forth to spot those odd compositional mistakes that can creep in. Mistakes show up clearly when flipped.

**15 | FINISHING TOUCHES**  
The last stage is to work in the final flourishes – a shadow here, a highlight there – making sure the texture and brushwork is consistent. Finally, place a few adjustment layers to fine-tune the saturation and contrast.





# Learn in style



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An illustration of Spider-Man and Iron Spider flying over a city. Spider-Man is in the foreground, holding onto a web line, while Iron Spider is behind him. The city below is rendered in a stylized, angular manner with red and blue tones. The title '25 TIPS FOR COMIC ARTISTS' is prominently displayed in the center, with 'COMIC' in a large, bold, white font on a red background, and 'ARTISTS' in a large, bold, white font on a blue background. The words '25 TIPS FOR' are in a smaller, white font on a blue background.

# 25 TIPS FOR COMIC ARTISTS

COMIC ART WEAVES TOGETHER WORDS AND PICTURES, IT SPANS GENRES AND TOPICS, AND IT APPEALS TO BOTH SEXES AND ALL AGE RANGES. BUT AS THE EXPERTS REVEAL, ALL IT NEEDS IS A GREAT STORY

© MARVEL

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## 01. FORM AND FUNCTION

A PAGE FROM LUKE PEARSON'S ([HTTP://LUKEPEARSON.COM](http://LUKEPEARSON.COM)) *HILDA* AND *THE BLACK HOUND* SHOWS HOW A GOOD COMIC SHOULD FUNCTION



© Luke Pearson/Nobrow Press

**Matters of style:** "For the *Hilda* comics, I think my style is pretty much a mixture of Franco-Belgian comic art, Tove Jansson, and the cartoonier end of Manga (Osamu Tezuka, Akira Toriyama). At least that's what I consciously think about."

**Contrast action and tone:** "Hilda has a big, expressive face and is fun to throw around and do physical stuff with. I like to play that stuff up for certain melodramatic scenes. But I also try to pull back from it and create a quieter mood a lot of the time, which maybe plays against how it looks."

**A question of colour:** "My colour theory consists of spending forever picking out a few colours that complement each other (and that Hilda looks good placed in front of, as she's in nearly every panel) and then only adding new tones and colours into the mix when it looks weird if I don't."

**On the turn:** "Breaking it into pages is one of the most important parts for me, as I like to try and hit certain notes on a page turn, and I'll usually have a good idea where in the story I want certain events to occur."

**Grow into your characters:** "If you draw a character for a sustained amount of time, you slowly iron out all the kinks and your hand eventually learns how to do it on its own accord. But the start always looks a bit ropery in hindsight. If you draw the pages in order though, it's a gradual change and the reader doesn't notice it."

**Face the fear (and do it anyway):** Pearson says the *Hilda* comics are incredibly challenging: "Each one ends up being the longest comic I've ever done, takes me longer than I think and usually ends up including a bunch of stuff I'm not confident at drawing that I have to figure out in a short amount of time. I had some kind of brief meltdown during each one."



© Mako Fufu

## 02. PICTURE THE BIG SCREEN

Manga artist Mako Fufu ([www.makofufu.com](http://www.makofufu.com)) says that "a good comic artist is the one who not only tells the story, but also uses their talent and creativity to make the pages visually interesting yet easy to read. As comics must be thought of in a cinematic fashion, the artist should be able to read the script while their mind is creating and playing a movie version in their head, which they would translate to panels afterwards. In comics you can (and should) play with the panel shapes as well. That would make the page more visually attractive, and at the same time it's a resource to accentuate certain acts, objects, emotions and such. The artist has to direct and edit, being able to figure out when the page needs a few panels to describe an action, and when it's time for a change of scene or day, moving to the next part by inserting a panel with different scenery (or a sunrise, for a change of day, for example)."

Fufu fully embraces the manga aesthetic, which gives her other visual elements to fill her (cinematic) frame with. She says: "There are many specific characteristics from this style, like the sweat drop for uncomfortable situations, the huge vein for anger, the dynamic positioning and shape of the panel and also different types of screentones, including abstract backgrounds. Many of these have been popularised and may be found in non-manga-style comics, though."

## 03. DON'T POLISH, JUST FINISH

For Daniel de Sosa (<http://oi.thecomicseries.com>), starting the first issue of his comic series *Oi! Tales Of Bardic Fury*, which he did as his final project for his illustration course at university, is still the most challenging project he's ever worked on. "I had never made a long-form story comic before," he explains, "so there were a lot of things I had no idea how to do. It was really overwhelming to sit down midway through pencilling the first page and realise I had 20 more pages to go. There were also a lot of things in the story that I wasn't sure I'd be able to draw, as I'd never drawn them before. I tackled this problem simply by bombing forward anyway, and focusing

on finishing one page at a time. It was hard work, and took me twice as long to do as it would take me now, simply because I was so clueless as to what I was doing. Overall I hardly slept, made loads of mistakes, but somehow managed to meet the deadline I set for myself. The comic has had a really good response ever since I started putting it online and taking it to comic conventions, so the hard work and sleepless nights definitely paid off. So that's my advice: every time you feel overwhelmed, and unsure of your ability to tackle a project, just bomb forward and do it anyway. You will make loads of mistakes like I did, but it's the only way to get better."



© Daniel de Sosa



## 04. ALWAYS SERVE THE STORY

### 001 | Pace your panels

Christian Ward ([www.cjwardart.com](http://www.cjwardart.com)) believes the most important thing a comic artist must be is a good storyteller. He says: "There's a fantastic Alan Moore quote; paraphrasing it he said 'it was the artist's job to slow the reader down'. It's true. Each panel is a bubble designed to hold the reader's attention for a certain amount of time. I also think the shape of a panel and how it relates to other panels can also help with storytelling, not just holding the attention but directing it."

### 002 | Play with the page

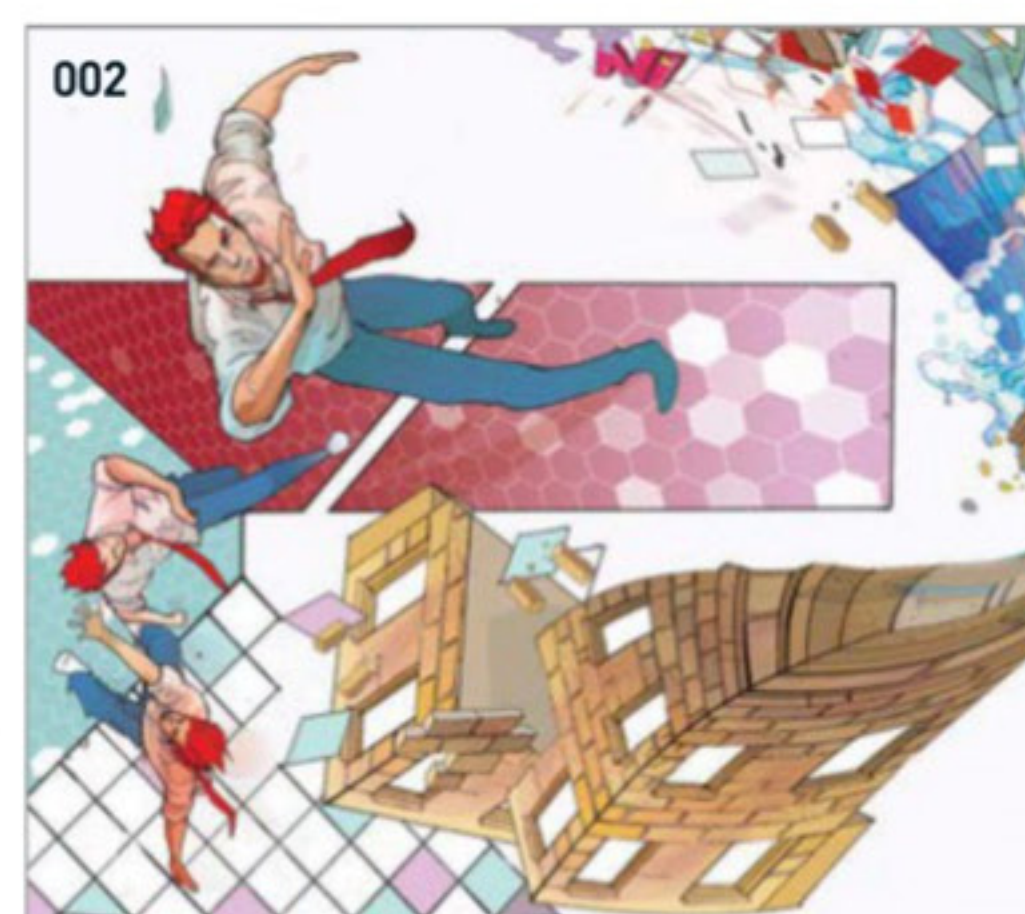
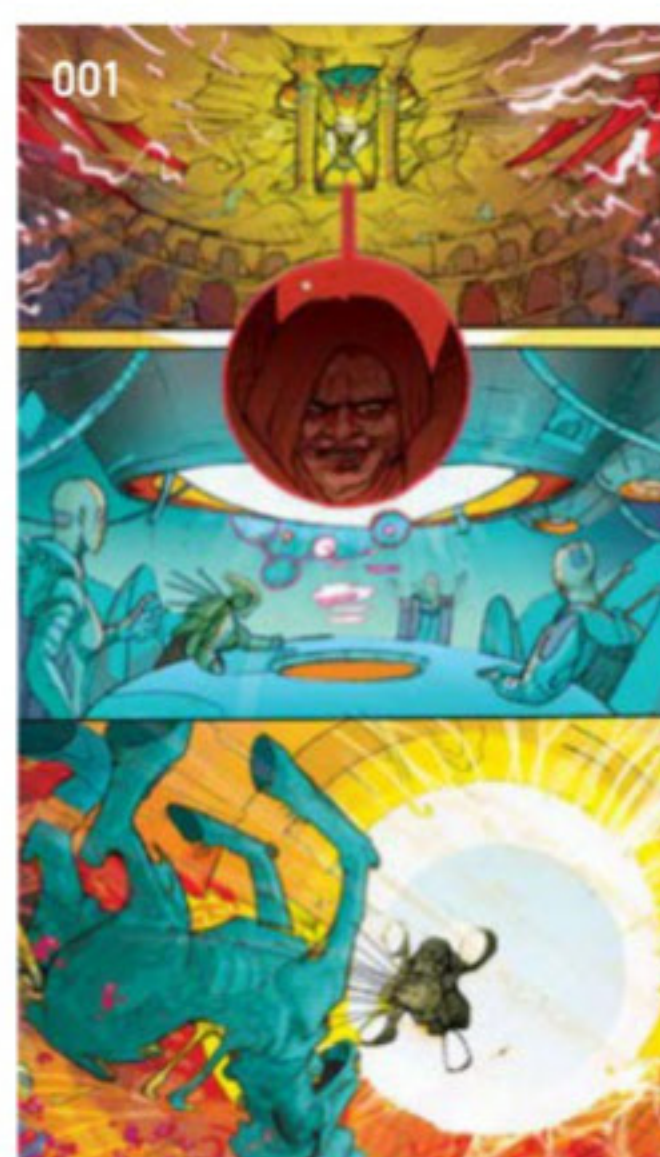
Ward is "interested in using the panel structure to play a part in storytelling. For instance, in my previous book *The Infinite Vacation* (with writer Nick Spencer), I had a sequence of double-page spreads that had you rotating the book in your hand as you read them, mimicking the spiralling universes our hero found himself in."

### 003 | Colour as storyteller

"I colour in an expressionist way," says Ward, "allowing a character's or a scene's mood to influence how they and the page is coloured. 50 per cent of my storytelling comes from colour. In *ODY-C*, for instance, I want the colour to reflect the mythological quality of the story. Give it a hyper-reality. The colour turned up to ten. I looked at a lot of Hindu iconography and the depiction of the gods is so saturated by colour."

### 004 | Start with the script

Ward says: "Once I read through the script a few times and feel I have a good handle on all the beats, I do a very quick layout sketch in Photoshop. Here I'll focus on the page's structure and flow. It's easy to chop and change things and see what works and what doesn't. Everything else is just decoration, and in fact without a good handle of storytelling – being able to convey the story in a fluid, clear and yet atmospheric fashion – you don't have good comics."



All images © Christian Ward

## 05. FIND YOUR NICHE

TOM HUMBERSTONE ([www.tomhumberstone.com](http://www.tomhumberstone.com)) WRITES A WEEKLY COMIC STRIP FOR THE NEW STATESMAN. HE EXPLAINS HOW IT'S DONE...



### 01 | DOUBLE THE DRAW

"I start by drawing my page using non-repro blue pencil on 300 vellum Strathmore Bristol board. I ink it using Windsor & Newton Series 7 brushes and a Hunt 102 dip pen. I alternate between Deleter and W&N inks. The image is drawn about double the size it appears in print. Once the image is scanned, I prep it for colour work by adjusting contrasts, running an Unsharp Mask filter, and converting to bitmap."



### 02 | MAKE PANELS POP

"I add a white background layer and between that and the line-art layer, I start laying in flat colours. Once I have all my flat colours in place, I use the flats to select parts of the image I want to colour in more detail on a separate layer on top. On another layer above that, I do the same for areas I want to add gradients to. Generally I tend to avoid using gradients, but I added a couple for this piece as it seemed to make a couple of panels stronger."



### 03 | COLOUR CORRECTION

"I do the lettering using a font of my handwriting, group all the text layers together and then draw balloons/caption boxes in layers underneath the text group. I add custom textures and grains that I've made through the years using paint or screenprinting. I edit the colours of the line-art layer where appropriate and finally, I'll adjust the colour scheme slightly by adding layers of colour or by editing the saturation."

## 06. KNOW THE MECHANICS

Luke Pearson is both a comic book artist and an illustrator, and he wrote as well as drew the *Hilda* series of comics, as well as the graphic novel *Everything We Miss*. He's well placed, therefore, to see how the different roles vary, and what skill sets are needed for each. "I think there are few qualities [for being a comic artist] that differ from those necessary for being an illustrator," he says. "Mainly you need to understand the basic language/workings of comics and how people read them, which doesn't have much to do with the art at all. How to arrange panels so that they're read in the right order, for instance. How to incorporate text without making it confusing or ugly. How to compose individual panels. That's where most people will trip up."

"There's more at stake drawing a comics panel than there is an illustration, in that an illustration can usually be ignored, but if a comics panel doesn't make sense or accidentally communicates the wrong thing, it can mess up the whole piece. If you're writing the comic as well then you also need to be able to tell a story and know which bits should be told and which bits should be shown. Everything else is pretty subjective and depends on the kind of comic you're making. You need to be able to draw but you don't need to have any particular taste or draw in a certain way."



© Luke Pearson/Nobrow Press





## 07. WORK WITH THE WRITER

Anthony Williams ([www.comicstripper.co.uk](http://www.comicstripper.co.uk)), who has worked for both Marvel and DC, believes the question of how to balance text and art is an interesting one because "more often than not the writer and the artist are two different people. Whether this is the case or not, good storytelling relies on a collaboration of ideas, words and visuals, and the most successful collaborations have a well-judged and complementary balance of text and art. I wouldn't like to ascribe one or the other as being better at conveying particular events or reveals as this would be too prescriptive. Writers are capable of painting pictures with their words and artists are capable of description and storytelling within their art. That said, I've always held to the maxim that you should be able to follow the basic narrative of a comic book story without the text in place."

## 08. EXPERIMENT

CHRISTIAN WARD IS WORKING WITH WRITER MATT FRACTION ON A NEW IMAGE COMIC BOOK, ENTITLED *ODY-C*



**Follow two plots:** *ODY-C* has multiple stories happening simultaneously, and Ward "wanted to see if [he] could show two sequences in the same space playing out at once."

**Choose your own adventure:** Ward wanted "a layout that allowed the reader to choose to read down the left side of the page or down the right side rather than just left to right."

**Try different techniques:** "I love laying several separate layers of colours on top of each other," says Ward, "experimenting with opacity and overlaying, colour burning, multiplying each layer to create interesting and often unexpected results. Although it'll often result in my work having sometimes up to a hundred layers, it always results in work retaining a sense of vibrancy and surprise."

**Push genre boundaries:** *ODY-C* is a retelling of *The Odyssey* as "gender-swapping hard science fiction."

**Go with the flow...** "I often just draw and see what happens," says Ward. "If I see a random abstract shape forming as I draw (in the structure of a face for instance), I like to bring it out and make it apparent. I'm certainly less interested in presenting a realistic view of the world, rather one full of coloured shapes and patterns."

**...but leave a trail of breadcrumbs:** To make sure your experiment but don't get lost, Ward says: "Focus on the storytelling, and everything else will follow."



## 09. READ BETWEEN THE LINES

Award-winning manga artist Svetlana Chmakova ([www.svetlania.com](http://www.svetlania.com)) uses what she doesn't draw, as much as what she does. "Sometimes the reader's imagination is your most powerful storytelling tool," she explains. "I like to leave some scenes open-ended, where I would lead up to an event, and then cut to the next scene, maybe of the result, leaving the reader to imagine what happened in between. As long as the lead-up is clear, this trick can be far more effective than me laboriously drawing out a scene and risking missing the mark with an intended effect. The readers know best what they want to see there... That being said, I try not to cheat my audience out of cool scenes they'd rather see than imagine! You have to go by instinct, deciding what to draw, and what to leave out. Also, consider how much of your life you want to spend drawing any given story, then cut scenes accordingly."



© Anthony Williams



## 10. EMBRACE NARRATIVE

"A good comic artist is someone who appreciates the need to balance the demands of storytelling with a desire to express oneself through an artistic discipline," says Anthony Williams. "There are many incredibly talented artists working in comics who fail to understand that the fundamental goal of the medium is to tell a compelling story. I have been guilty myself in the past of looking to draw exciting 'money' shots at the expense of the storytelling. A comic story is not a book of poster shots but a narrative, and great comic artists embrace that and express themselves through the telling of the story."

Panel rhythm is something that becomes instinctive, he adds: "For me the most enjoyable part of the process is thumb-nailing out the complete story. This is pure storytelling without the encumbrance of worrying about the quality of the art. I really enjoy developing the pacing, the composition and the story building."

## 11. PACE YOURSELF

Comic, concept and cover artist David Nakayama ([www.davidnakayama.com](http://www.davidnakayama.com)) explains how important story structure and pacing is. "First and foremost," he says, "I like to define the key moments in each story and structure everything else around those. Reading over each page of the comic script, I figure out which beats have the most impact, both on a page-by-page basis and in the story overall. Then, during the drawing process, I do whatever I can to support this artistically. For example, I might make an important moment the biggest panel on the page, do something special with the panel framing, and/or concentrate extra rendering there – whatever it takes to draw the reader's eye where I want it to go."

"With the key moments accounted for, now I can worry about pacing the rest of the story. In general, more panels means SLOW and fewer panels means FAST, so in quiet, contemplative scenes, I'll generally use a lot of small panels to describe many smaller actions. Conversely, in an action-packed fight sequence, I'll do the opposite--just a few large panels to sell the speed and scale of the action at hand. In combination, you really get a sense of ebb and flow in the storytelling."

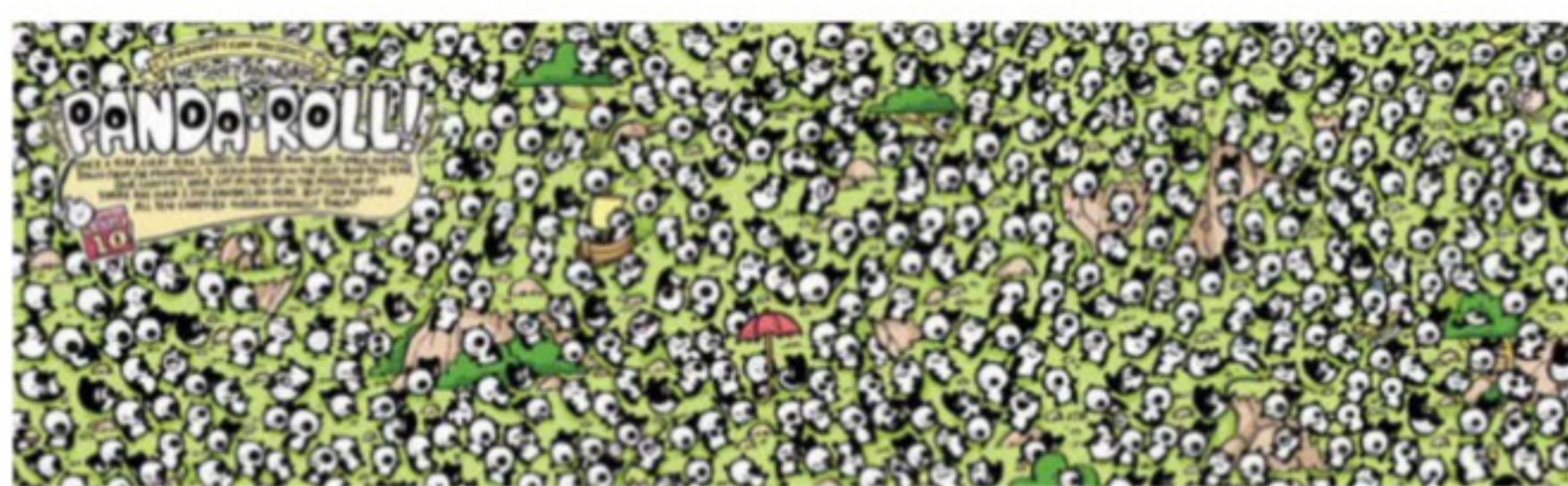


© David Nakayama



## 12. CONTROL MOOD WITH COLOUR

When you're drawing a comic – and even more so if you're writing it too – you're building a world. Not only do you want to tell a story in that world, but ideally you want to control how your reader feels about that story too. In that, colour is your best friend. "I like vibrant colours," says Mako Fufu. "So if it's a page of my webcomic or a random single-page story, I generally go for it (I need more white backgrounds to visually compensate, though). On longer stories, it usually depends on the mood I want to convey; what the story is about. If it's a more dramatic story, I would go for more sober tones, for example. An extreme variation in colour from one panel to another may indicate something that happened in the past, a dream, a fantasy, another dimension and so on. That stylistic device may also be applied to the borders or the page background, so the reader would perceive the difference without having any colouring change on the panels themselves."



## 13. SEARCH FOR CHARACTER

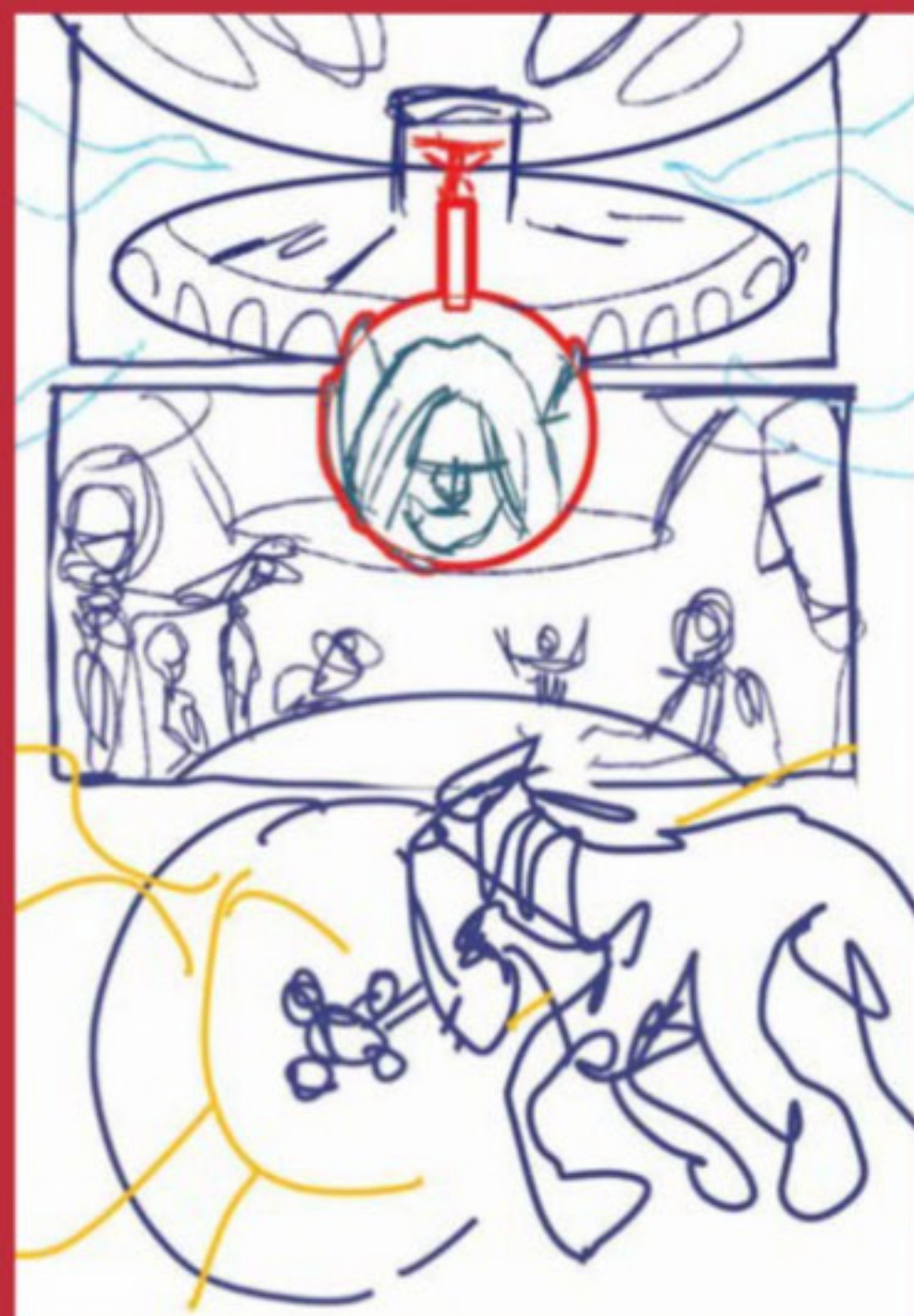
For comic artists who work on kids' titles, the picture search is a tough challenge. Jamie Smart ([www.fumboo.com](http://www.fumboo.com)) worked on some called *Find Chaffy*. "I drew each search on an A2 sheet," he says, "filling every bit of space with characters. In the end I did about 20 of those, then went on to do a similar process for my picture search pages in *Doctor Who Adventures* magazine, and there have been over 50 of those. I loved doing it; there's something very absorbing about getting lost in the details of a really big piece of artwork, but I don't know if I'd want to repeat it. For all the fun, it made me a bit cross-eyed by the end."

Keeping characters consistent across pages is a challenge, as Smart explains: "Most characters are made up of basic shapes, and that varies for every artist. My basic shapes are circles for the heads, then a small lump for the body, and around that framework I can add limbs and faces and whatever else. Once you've found the shapes you like using, it only takes a bit of practice to ingrain that into your brain, and once it's there it just becomes habit." For Smart, the first step in a picture search image is to draw lots of "little scenes, certain characters doing certain things, randomly all over the page. Then slowly add more activity around each of those scenes, which then begins to connect the picture together. This one took about seven days," adds Smart, "but I've done so many now I've got it down to three (rather long) days."

## 14. FIND YOUR OWN PROCESS

### 01 | PLAN THE LAYOUT

Once Ward has read the script, his first step is to use Photoshop to design basic panel structure and layout. "I find that your own style is largely invisible to yourself," says Ward. "It simply is the way you draw, and it's easier to see mistakes or areas of improvement where other people see style."



### 02 | SCANNING AND PENCILLING

Based on the digital rough, Ward will produce rough pencils. Character consistency is important, but Ward thinks "character acting" is even more so: "I spend many hours staring at myself in Photo Booth pulling all sorts of faces. I think if you can nail a character's personality through evoking their emotions then the inconsistencies matter less. Once readers are connected emotionally with a character, they'll forgive the odd wonky nose."



### 03 | ANOTHER PASS, COLOUR PASS

Ward uses a light box to create a pass with tight and more finished pencils. After that, it's time to colour the image, which is almost all done in Photoshop. However, Ward notes: "I have a bank of watercolour paintings and textures that I cut up and layer onto gradients of colour to give the final pages more tension."







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## 15. CREATE COMPELLING CHARACTERS

It doesn't matter how good your art, your dialogue or even your story is if you haven't got a captivating protagonist to put on the page. As in most films and TV, it helps if they're active and look striking enough to be memorable. To keep her characters strong, Mako Fufu says she "usually [has] either some model sheets or at least illustrations of them; they are a good reference, especially when the character is new (or new to you), had a major transformation, or you have a large amount of characters appearing in the same comic. As you get familiar with the character, it gets easier. But at the same time you should allow some change since the character may mutate and evolve, because due to the repetition and practice your own style mutates and evolves. I enjoy comparing the first and the latest episodes from mangas like *Berserk*, where the artist was amazing to start with, and he got even better as the story progressed."



## 16. COVER YOURSELF

David Nakayama says, "When it comes to style, I'm sort of a weird case. I'm constantly playing with different styles – traditional comic line art, photoreal painting, bold graphic shapes – always trying to find the perfect custom look for each project I'm working on." And it's on the cover of comics that this look really has to come together.

"As a cover artist," says Nakayama, "I use colour in a few different ways. For one, colour can help with the separation of elements in your image, controlling how clearly it 'reads' for the viewer. Secondly, colour can establish an emotional tone. So red conveys heat, anger, and rolling motion, while cooler hues might give a sense of placidity or sadness. Lastly, colour helps to focus attention. For example, I like to save the brightest, most saturated colours for the most important area of the image. If surrounded by duller, less intense colours, the viewer's eye will naturally go right there... it's rare these days to have any text on the cover other than the logo. So it's sometimes possible to stand out simply by using a text element that's integrated into the art. That's always fun. In the case of interior panel art, I personally prefer to use text as a supporting device and let the art itself do most of the heavy lifting. Sometimes, a scene with no text at all can speak the loudest."



© David Nakayama



© Daniel de Sosa

## 18. MAKE COLOUR COUNT

Daniel de Sosa admits: "I used to rely on colour to hide weak drawings and paper over cracks, but now I just use it to accentuate a piece. I mostly create work in black and white now, adding colour overlays in via Photoshop only towards the end of working on a piece. My comics improved a lot when I stopped using colour and focused only on creating pages in black and white, and I recommend this to all cartoonists who are just starting out. A piece should stand on its own without colour. My stance on colour also has to do with the fact that I self-publish most of my work, and printing in black and white costs a fraction of the cost that printing in full colour does. Basically, my view is if you are going to take the time to colour something, make it count."

## 17. COLLABORATE

The most challenging project Svetlana Chmakova has worked on was "the manga adaptation of James Patterson's *Witch & Wizard*. Not only because I had to fit an entire prose book per just one manga volume, but also because the settings were much more varied and different than what I would usually write for myself. This was a great opportunity for artistic growth, because I was challenged to draw things I normally would avoid!"

But even if Chmakova is working on her own project, the feedback of others is vital: "I start writing with concept sketches and snippets of dialogue, which I then shape and type up into a detailed script, complete with page breaks and scene descriptions. I then sketch the script out as storyboards/rough page layouts, so that I can get a feel for the visual flow of the story. I usually adjust the script a lot at this point, because what looks good in the script may not necessarily work as well visually. Once I am happy with my storyboard, I send it to my editor for feedback, and make further story adjustments as needed."



© Svetlana Chmakova



## 19. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

"Before starting the comic," says Daniel de Sosa, "it's good to have a model sheet worked out, where you draw the character from different angles, and work out various facial expressions. When designing a new character, I make sure to practise drawing them over and over in my sketchbook until I can get them consistent and have a good feel for showing their personality. These model sheets are also useful to compare character sizes and heights so that it stays consistent. Overall though, it is best not to worry too much about this. Storytelling trumps all, and the more you draw your character the more consistent they will become until eventually it will become second nature to you. Just look at Homer Simpson in the first episodes of *The Simpsons*, to how he appears today. He looks very, very different, but everyone still knows it's the same character."





## 20. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

All creative endeavours require bravery, and a confidence that you have a story worth telling, and that the road you're going down is the right one. The great thing about comics is that you usually have a writer and an editor that you can bounce ideas off. But while many comics are created in collaboration, others are the product of a writer/artist, and that single vision can be a wonderful thing. "My webcomic is usually my most challenging project," says Mako Fufu. "There are a lot of stories that I want to tell, but since it's based on real-life events or things that go through my mind, sometimes it's hard to edit. It's also my own project so there's nobody to approve it for me, I have to decide by myself if this is effective on what I want to communicate or not. It takes some extra thinking, sketching and adjusting, but it gets done every time!"

It may be hard, but working alone does bring freedom: "If it's my own story, the script may change even after the coloring stage if I find it fitting," says Fufu. More importantly, her style is different and she is more sparing with text when she goes it alone: "When I work on my own projects and I have full control, I try not to have a lot of text on each panel, making it understandable without being redundant."

## 21. MAKE YOUR OWN RULES

All artforms have rules, and it pays to know them, but that doesn't mean you have to keep them. For instance, as Jamie Smart explains, "Panels are a great way to frame each scene or event, and to pace the story so it doesn't go too fast or skip anything important. But at the same time, panels are guidelines; they're rules to be broken, so it's a good idea to experiment with them and see what they can do. For example, you can stretch panels out, break them up, flow them in a direction, make a single panel into a whole page, or fill a page with loads of panels showing the same character's expression just to pace out a joke

at the end of it. I did one book where there were no panels at all, just individual drawings nestling next to each other on a page."

And Smart likes to find his own way when it comes to speech bubbles too, because "again, it's a case of finding your groove, and forming habits. My speech bubbles often wedge up into the top of a panel, leaving the rest of the space free for artwork. I always draw speech bubbles and art at the same time though – I know a lot of artists draw speech bubbles separately and then lay them over the art afterwards, but I prefer everything to be integrated together from the start."

## 22. POUR YOUR OWN PERSONALITY IN

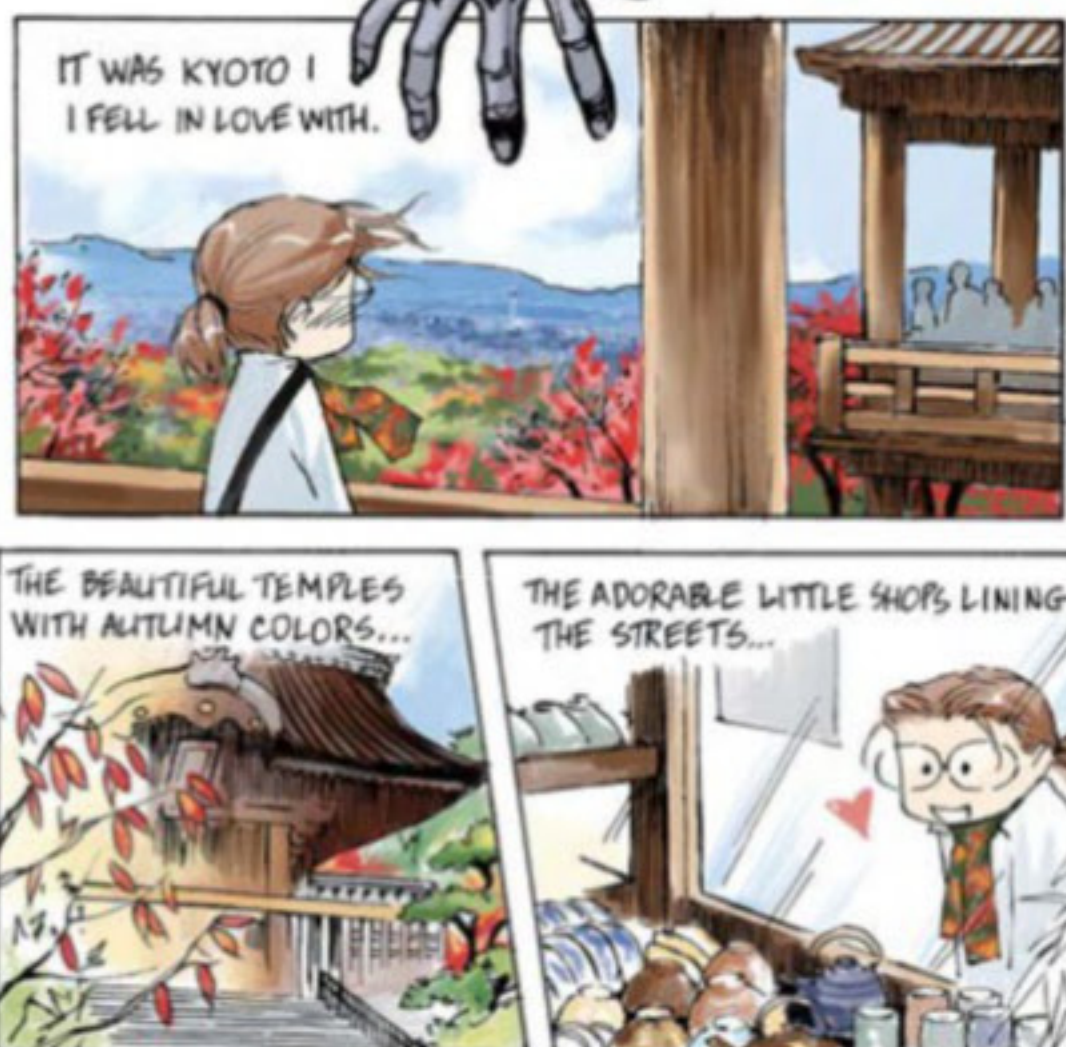
My style is quite cutesy, humorous, often involving animals hitting each other," says Jamie Smart. "I try and make the whole comic funny, not just the final gag panel, so the premise, the characters and the story all need to be silly and make me laugh. I have quite a short attention span, so if it bores me, then I figure it will bore the audience and I don't draw it. Look at the comics you enjoy and try and see what's working for you – maybe it's how an

artist draws their character's eyes, or how they show motion, or just the funny language they use. These ideas will absorb into your own style and all contribute towards making your own comics unique and brilliant.

"And finally, draw comics because you love to do them. Don't draw them for an audience, but instead draw the things that make YOU laugh. Then you'll find you are always drawing the best comics."







## 24. MAKING MANGA

"After the storyboard is completed and I am confident that the story and layout are working," says Svetlana Chmakova, "I enlarge my storyboard sketches and use them as a base for pencilling the actual pages. I used to pencil completely digitally, using the Photoshop brush tool, but the last few years I've gone back to HB pencil on inkjet paper and only use Photoshop to sketch out the really complex and tricky scenes (so that I can use the layers function to help me out!) Once I have my pencilled pages, I scan them into Photoshop and use the Hue/Saturation functions to convert them to a light non-photo blue colour. I then print them out at inking size (on B4 paper), ink with Sakura Micron pigment liners and a Pentel pocket brush, and scan them back as black and white art (the blue lines do not scan at all with this setting, so I get a crisp ink scan). Screentoning I usually do in Deleter ComicWorks and Manga Studio, but if there is any colour, I usually paint in Photoshop."

## 23. BE READY, BE OPEN, BE FLEXIBLE

"Draw from life," says Anthony Williams, in wise words for any type of artist. "Don't just reference other comic artists. Study illustrators from other disciplines. Be a constant student of visual storytelling in its many forms, whether it be print, film or theatre. Above all, keep drawing, and if you really want to break into comics, build a body of your best and most competent work for your portfolio. If you get the opportunity to show it to

someone in the profession, be open to their advice and criticism."

And if you want to work, be flexible. Williams says he has the "ability to adapt to the job in hand. My style is determined by the particular commission, and I really enjoy the ability to dramatically switch gears depending on the demands of a particular job. The one thing that is constant no matter what style, is telling exciting, dynamic stories."

## 25. PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS

For Luke Pearson, panel rhythm "varies massively depending on what I want to convey. I guess an example would be that if it's an action scene, something new will be happening in each panel. I'll keep the dialogue down and keep extraneous details to a minimum so that you don't linger too long on a particular panel. For quieter, more introspective scenes, I might spread a character's action out over a series of panels, or explore the environment a bit more, dragging things out to keep you on that page and give the impression of time moving slowly. I like to do big, full bleed establishing shots to give a good sense of the setting before I spend the scene more concerned

with close-ups and the characters' interactions." And when it comes to words, "The main thing to avoid is having the text say what the art is showing. It's usually best if neither works without the other, or if the text adds subtext to a seemingly straightforward image. I find you can get away without much text at all. There are plenty of comics that eschew text altogether and still tell a clear story. But then I tend to use text as sparingly as possible because I'm aware that I'm not a 'writer' and it's the part I feel most self-conscious about. Comics made with a writer/artist partnership tend to be a lot more text-heavy for obvious reasons."







Portability vs performance:  
The laptop is designed less  
with portability in mind and  
is more focused on the  
performance demands of a  
studio creative



# DELL PRECISION M2800

WE TEST OUT DELL'S PERFORMANCE-LED WORKSTATION TO FIND OUT IF IT SUITS OUR BUSY CREATIVE LIFESTYLE

[www.dell.com](http://www.dell.com)

#### SPECIFICATIONS:

- Windows 7 Professional
- Intel Core i7 Quad Core processor
- 8GB RAM
- 128GB SSD
- 15.6-inch UltraSharp full HD screen (1920 x 1080)
- 2.6kg

£1,613 (ex. VAT)  
\$2,486

**W**hen looking for your next workstation to fulfil your creative requirements, the options are staggering. Dell produces a range of notebooks, ultrabooks and workstations to cater for mobile users as well as heavy-duty, demanding production lines for creatives.

The Precision M2800 comes from Dell's range of its more powerful mobile workstations. The model features a 15.6-inch, full HD display that's been geared more towards studio professionals and designers working inside a busy production line, as opposed to being transported from one location to the next. It's not the lightest workstation ever made, or the most affordable at that, but it has been crafted to handle the demands of multiple creative

applications, and for being able to fit into a busy creative lifestyle. This is a workstation that's been ISV (independent software vendors) certified, meaning that it's been made in line with the requirements laid out by software vendors to produce a machine with an optimal performance rating for industry-leading applications. But does it show? The model we tested had top-of-the-range specifications – priced just over the £1,600 price mark. For this, the workstation comes with 8GB of DDR3L memory and is shipped with an Intel Core i7 processor (i7-4810MQ) running Windows 7 Professional. This combination of processor and operating system provides the efficiency and speed that's needed for working across the Creative Cloud.



Easy dialling: There's a numeric keypad that makes it easier to dial values into Photoshop

ISV certified: The Dell Precision M2800 has been certified by independent software vendors, meaning it's been tested with a range of creative programs







**HDMI out:** In our review we linked the Dell Precision M2800 to a larger external monitor to maximise our screen space – highly recommended for getting the most out of this laptop

► We found the workstation's overall performance to be more than enough to handle the demands of Photoshop, capable of running multiple applications at a time. This particular model featured an AMD FirePro M4170 graphics card for powering video production. The workstation's 128GB SSD storage may be limiting if you're working with larger PSB files, or large assets across other applications. If you're finding yourself in a constant battle for megabytes, this may be a limitation. Additional configurations, however, will allow up to 1TB of storage for hybrid alternatives, as opposed to SSD, with a small saving on the retail price. The construction of the M2800 is as good as they come, featuring an outer shell that's

solid and robust. However, if the time comes for taking this out of the studio environment, don't expect to be travelling light as it weighs a substantial 2.6kg. If you're used to more screen space than this workstation, you'll find its full HD resolution will be a fair compromise, and providing enough scope for working comfortably inside Photoshop.

We linked Precision M2800 to an external monitor, which helped to increase the potential screen space. Doing so enabled the most to be had out of what this workstation had to offer in terms of performance output, being able to jump across applications without lag or having to make rearrangements to the interfaces involved.

## ■ FORM OVER FUNCTION?

Ideally, a workstation should be able to complement your creative lifestyle, but also provide substance in the process. Not only does it need to produce enough raw power to cater for the likes of Photoshop and an array of other memory-crunching applications, but it also needs to be practical. With a nine-cell battery and a high build quality, the M2800 is more about delivering longer operating hours with plenty of power. The number of connections skirting the workstation's shell include four USB 3.0 ports; one on the rear with the others arranged around the sides. There's also an ExpressCard slot, optical drive, VGA and Ethernet connections, as well as an HDMI port allowing for faster connections to your external devices. On top of the workstation's range of externally located ports, the M2800 Bluetooth connectivity and Wireless allows for untethered connections to be had.



**Old-fashioned:** The clip-locking screen is somewhat quaint when compared to the design features of other new laptops on the market, but shuts snugly enough to feel secure



**Ports:** A total of four USB 3.0 ports plus an ExpressCard slot, optical drive, VGA and Ethernet connections, HDMI out, headphone jack and a Kensington lock





Mildly mobile: Although it doesn't have the slimmest design ever, and is not ideal for travelling and transporting around, it still manages to slot into a laptop case

Keyboard and trackpad: Running Windows 7 means that the M2800 has no touch screen capabilities, so you'll need to control it the old-fashioned way



When we compare the workstation to other Precision models by Dell, it makes sense to place the M2800 as a central throughput computer in a production line, which can handle heavy workloads in a bustling creative environment. The workstation's anti-glare screen does make a big difference if you ever find yourself on location, but the extra weight can prove hard to handle at times. The workstation is minus the kind of security features that you might expect from its price tag. For example, there's no fingerprint reader for easier access, and its old-fashioned, clip-locking screen is a feature we haven't seen for a while.

Shipping with Windows 7 Professional 64-bit (Windows 8 isn't an option with this model), you're left without any touch screen capabilities that are

becoming the norm even on high-end workstations. The Precision M2800 is not just suited for working across various editing applications, or overseeing the management of creative workflows, but also suitable for single-person studios or home environments that require little transportation. However, if it's an on-the-go lifestyle you lead, then you'll probably find that having a lighter and more space-efficient workstation would be more fitting and beneficial. If you're not put off by the workstation's hefty price, you'll be pleased to welcome this into the working environment. This is a powerful and tough workstation able to cope with Photoshop as well as more graphics-hungry software for broadening your creative potential.

## CHECK OUT THE ALTERNATIVES

WHAT YOUR MONEY CAN BUY WHEN IT COMES TO PERFORMANCE WORKSTATIONS

### LENOVO Y50

[www.lenovo.com](http://www.lenovo.com)

£1,400/\$1519 – This top-spec laptop by Lenovo features an Intel Core i7 processor with an UltraHD display 3840 x 2160, but with Windows 8, 16GB RAM and an NVIDIA GeForce (4GB) graphics processor, this packs more of a punch, and only weighs 2.4kg.



### HP ENVY TOUCHSMART 15

[www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com)

£999/\$1,149 – Weighing just less than the Dell, at 2.5kg, HP's touch screen full HD laptop includes an Intel Core i7 processor and 16GB RAM with the NVIDIA GeForce (2GB) graphics system behind it. HP's SimplePass fingerprint reader keeps it secure when you're not around.



### APPLE MACBOOK PRO

[www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)

£1,599/\$1,999 – Apple's 15.4-inch MacBook Pro boasts a native resolution of 2,880 by 1,800 with Retina quality. The 2.2GHz quad core i7 processor (expandable up to 3.4GHz), as well as 16GB RAM and 1TB of storage, provides plenty of juice, and weighs much less at 2.02kg.



Heavyweight: Weighing in at 2.6kg, this is not the kind of laptop you can take with you everywhere, but it does make a powerful studio workhorse

## VERDICT

Features: **9/10**

Ease of use: **8/10**

Quality of results: **9/10**

Value for money: **7/10**

**FINAL SCORE: 8/10**



# ESTABLISH YOUR SIGNATURE STYLE

ARTIST CRISTIAN ERES DISCUSSES HOW HE CREATES HIS SURREAL IMAGES USING A MIX OF BLENDING OPTIONS AND THE GRADIENT TOOL

**S**panish graphic designer and digital artist Cristian Eres always liked to draw, but discovered a new way of expressing himself when he started using Photoshop. Read on to discover how he adapted his signature style over time.

## PLEASE TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR HISTORY IN DIGITAL ART

I started creating surreal photomanipulations about ten years ago, but I found my style when I started creating vector art while studying graphic design. I graduated and then started making digital art for art collective The Luminarium. This year I joined the prestigious art collective Depthcore and I had my first commission for a big firm.

## YOUR STYLE IS QUITE ABSTRACT – TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR IMAGES

My style is inspired by the shapes of nature. I create organic, fluid and dynamic shapes that I merge [to create] abstract figures. I tend to create artwork using a wide range of colours and gradients, which give both a surreal and natural ambience. I love to challenge myself and adapt my style into whatever suits, but I especially love working with typography and creating surreal landscapes.

## YOUR IMAGES INVOLVE A LOT OF MOVEMENT. HOW DO YOU APPROACH EACH IMAGE THAT YOU START?

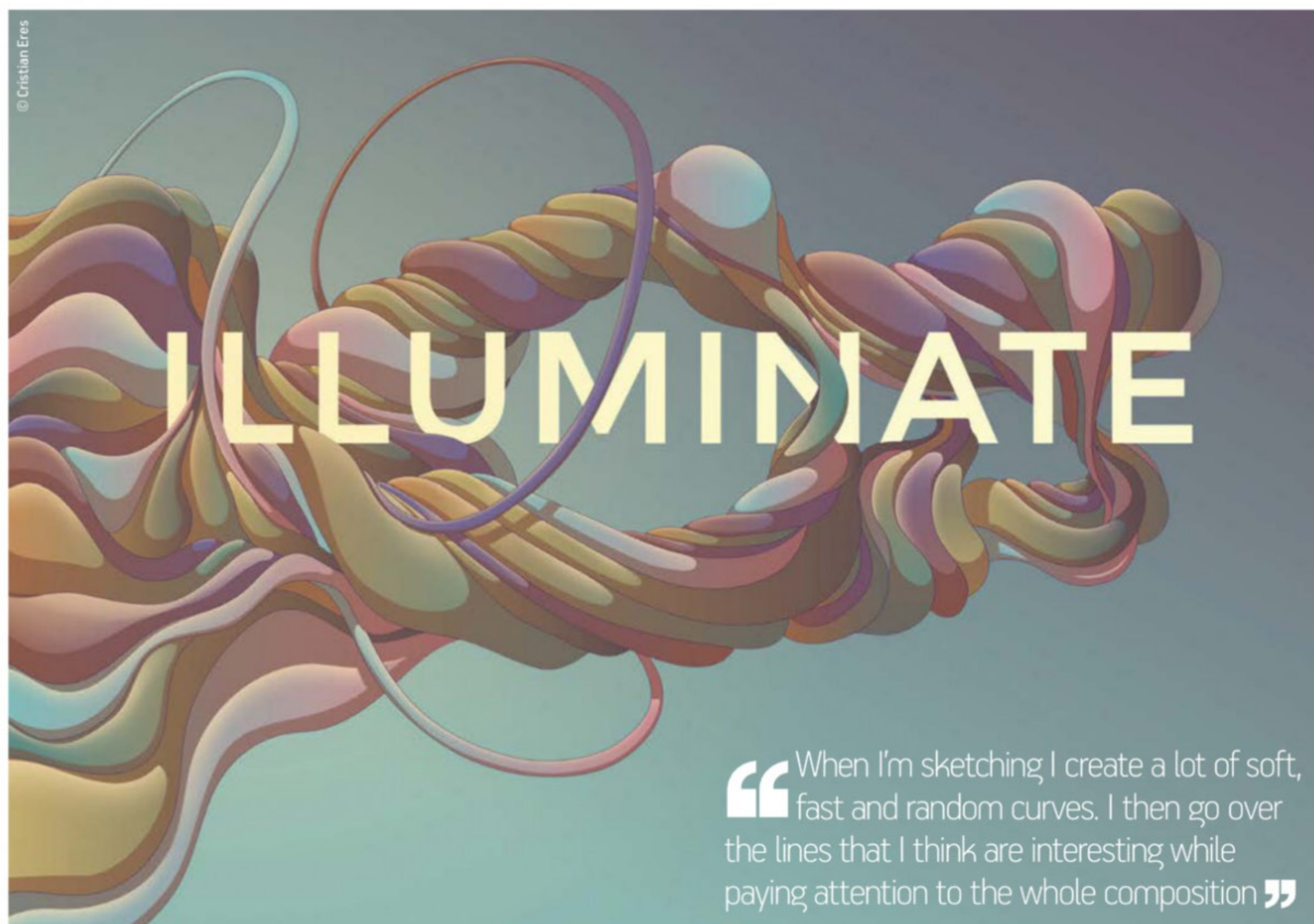
When I'm sketching I create a lot of soft, fast and random curves. I then go over the lines that I think



**OUR READER**  
**CRISTIAN ERES**

[www.cristianeres.com](http://www.cristianeres.com)  
[@cristianeres](https://twitter.com/cristianeres)

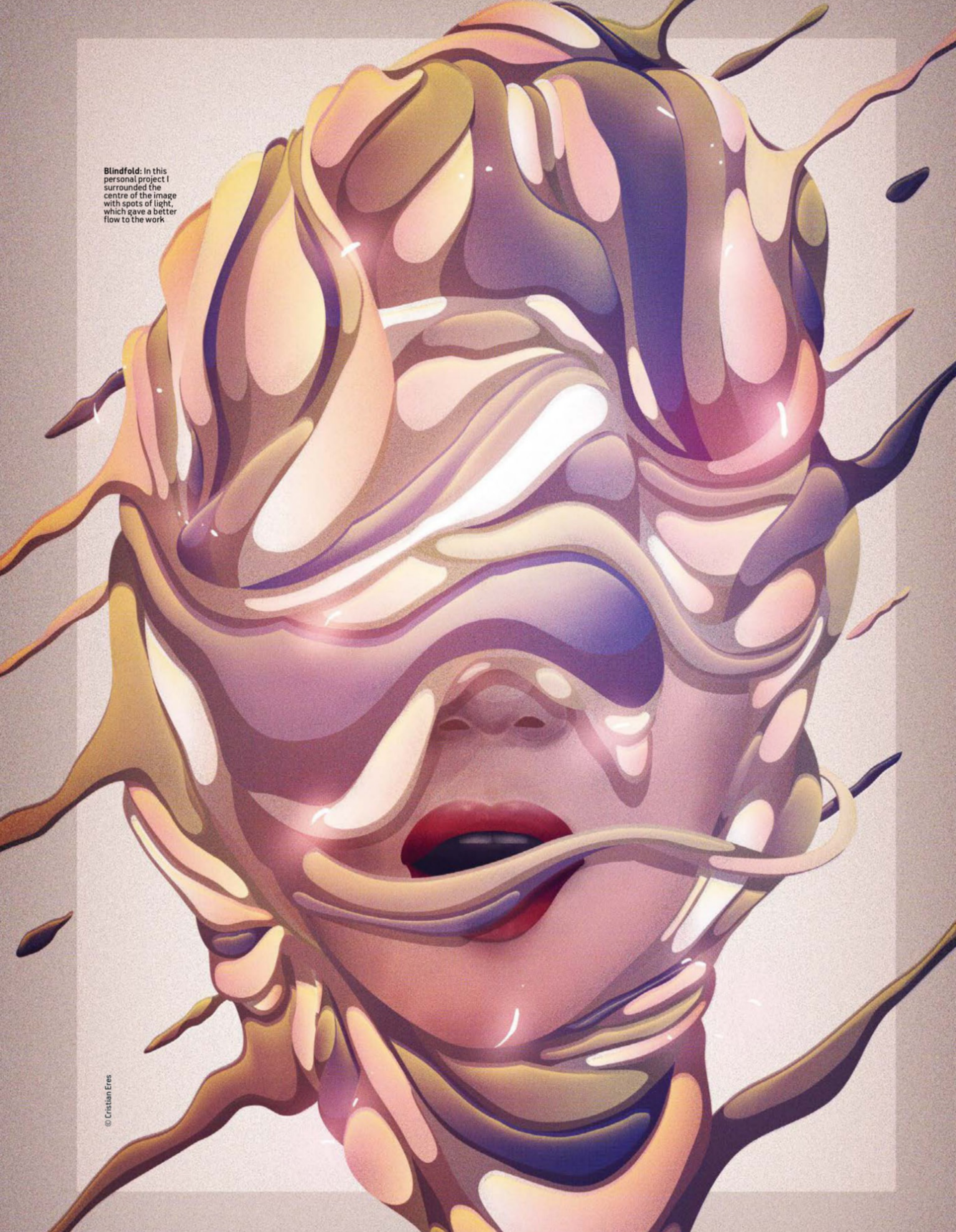
**Illuminate:** This work was submitted to the 22nd exhibition of the art group The Luminarium. It combines abstract shapes with clean typography without losing the unity of the piece



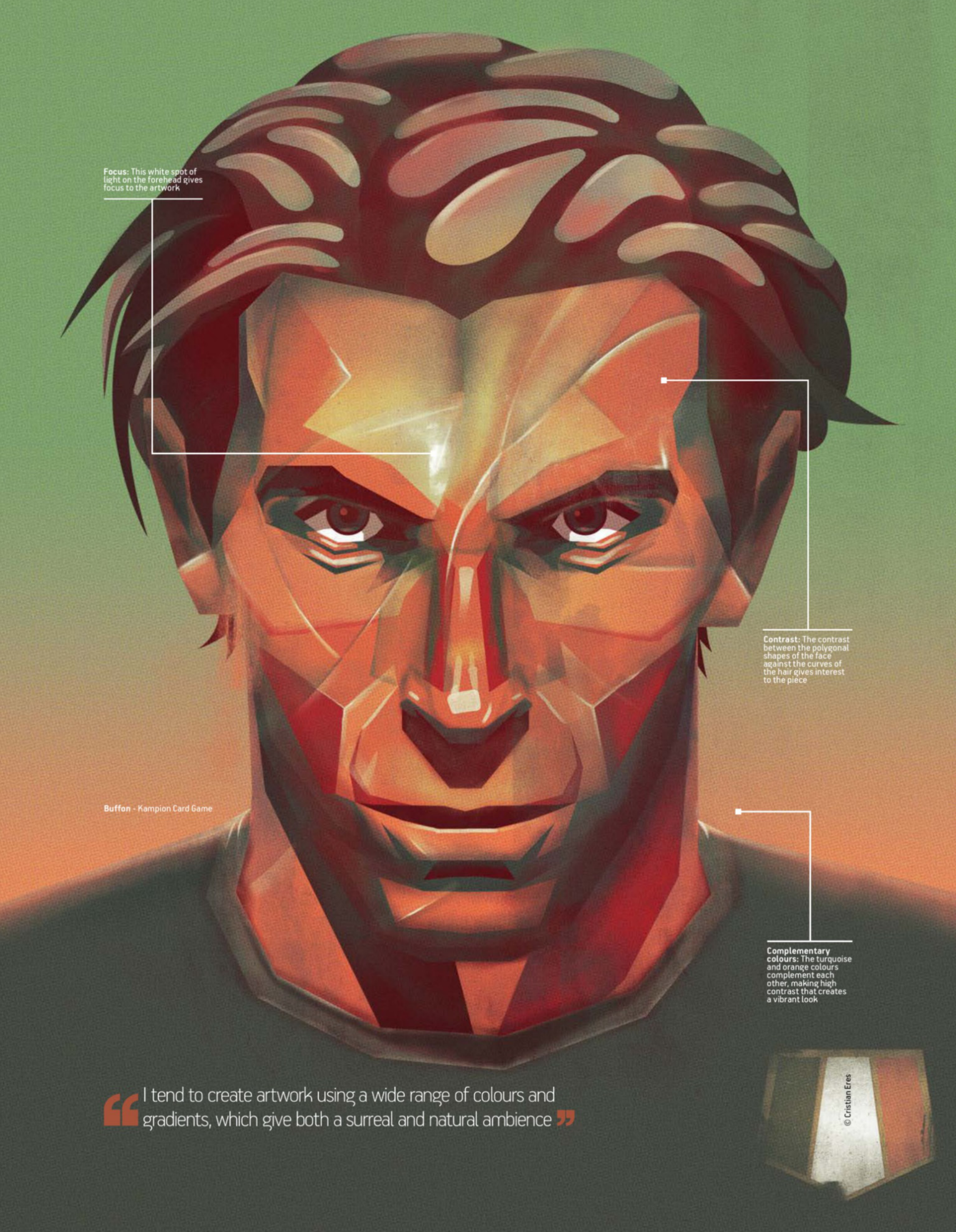
“When I'm sketching I create a lot of soft, fast and random curves. I then go over the lines that I think are interesting while paying attention to the whole composition”



**Blindfold:** In this personal project I surrounded the centre of the image with spots of light, which gave a better flow to the work







**Focus:** This white spot of light on the forehead gives focus to the artwork

**Contrast:** The contrast between the polygonal shapes of the face against the curves of the hair gives interest to the piece

Buffon - Kampion Card Game

**Complementary colours:** The turquoise and orange colours complement each other, making high contrast that creates a vibrant look

“ I tend to create artwork using a wide range of colours and gradients, which give both a surreal and natural ambience ”

© Cristian Eres



► that are interesting while paying attention to the whole composition. A lot of these shapes are inspired by nature and pictures that I save in my Tumblr. I love the shapes of the Grand Canyon.

#### WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT TO PAY ATTENTION TO WHEN CREATING AN IMAGE?

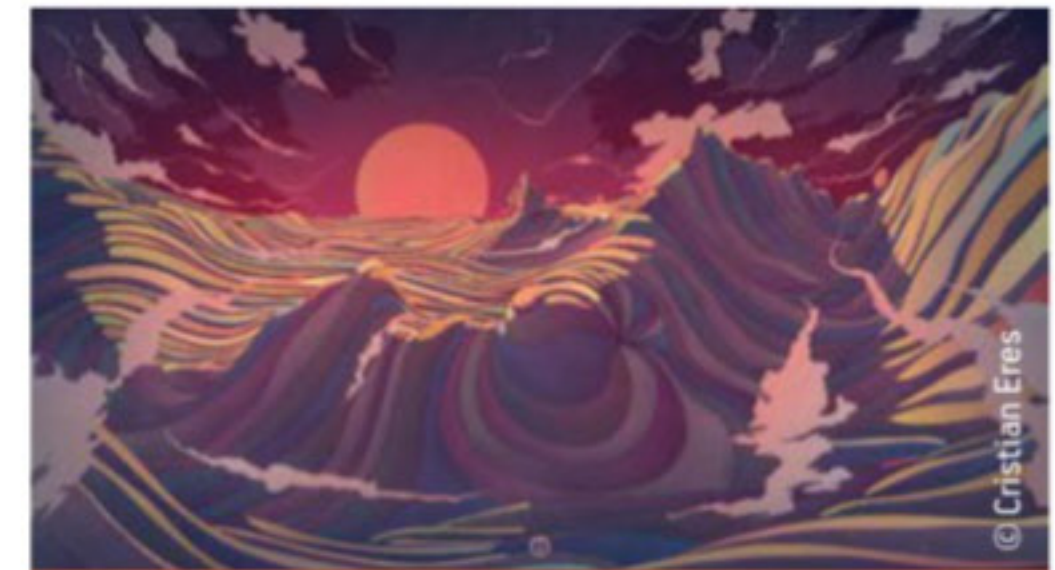
The most important area for me is to spend a lot of time on the drawing phase. I never draw directly on a tablet or computer – I need to draw on paper first. It helps me think of how the lines will merge and what the composition will be. I usually create a lot of quick sketches before I draw the final composition and once I have an idea, I look at how

lines merge, the rhythm, movement and negative space in the image.

#### WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST USEFUL PHOTOSHOP TOOL OR TECHNIQUE WHEN CREATING YOUR ARTWORK?

I really love the Gradient Map tool. I think it is the best way to control each level of colour and light and it's very versatile when combined with the blending options. For creating light effects, I usually combine the Selection tool and Photoshop brushes: I select the part that I want to work on and then paint it in. They are both tools that you can change and personalise and with these options, creating lights and shadows, or adapting textures, is an easy job.

“Just sketch out random curves without taking too much care and try to merge them, making a figure. Create a lot of pieces like that and allow yourself to take risks!”



#### DESIGN TIPS CREATING A LANDSCAPE

When creating a landscape you should take special care to find your focus point. You may use the sun as a focus for example, or a character. A good idea could be to also surround your focus with the mountains.

Take care when choosing the light direction. Try to create the lighter areas of the artwork near the focus or central point. You should also consider creating at least three planes of mountains, as this will give a better perspective to your piece.

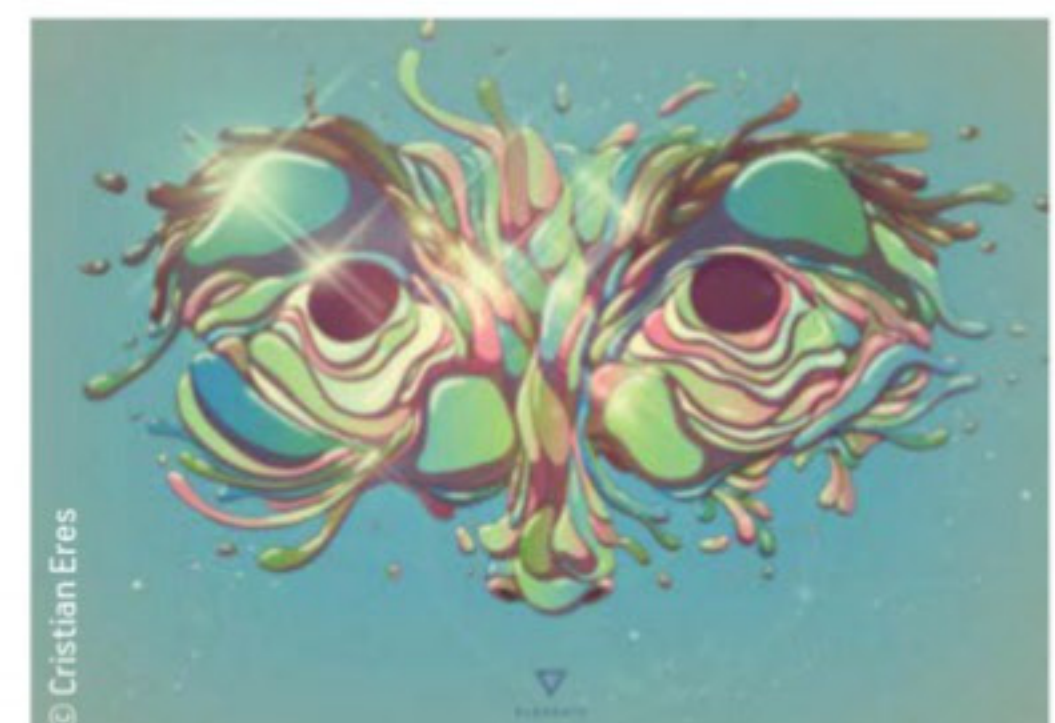
#### WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE TO AN ARTIST LOOKING TO PRODUCE THE SAME KIND OF WORK?

Draw a lot. My style is inspired by the organic shapes of nature and I've drawn lots of organic shapes into my sketchbooks, but I've also experimented drawing a lot of abstract shapes. Just sketch out random curves without taking too much care and try to merge them, making a figure. Create a lot of pieces like that and allow yourself to take risks. With time this process will give you a sense of beauty and it will eventually become easier for you to draw appealing subjects.

#### WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

I'm currently working on a short series of portraits and after that I'll start the Desktopography wallpaper for this year. I'm also going to create an illustrated book that will feature tips for designers, for which I will be collaborating with two important Spanish illustrators. I'll keep creating personal work, but I would like to keep evolving my style and to keep adapting it into new ways and mediums.

**Water:** This piece was submitted to the 21st exhibition of The Luminarium. In this case I adapted my style to give it a more fluid appearance







# CAPTURE WOOD GRAIN TEXTURES

ADD NATURAL BEAUTY TO YOUR  
DESIGNS WITH RUSTIC WOOD GRAINS

**W**ood surrounds us. We find it in our furniture, our walls, our doors, our desks, our fences, our pencils, our tools, and many other places. Chances are that right where you sit reading this, there's at least one example of a wood grain texture within your sight. Go ahead and look around and count how many different wooden elements you can see. It's okay, we'll wait.

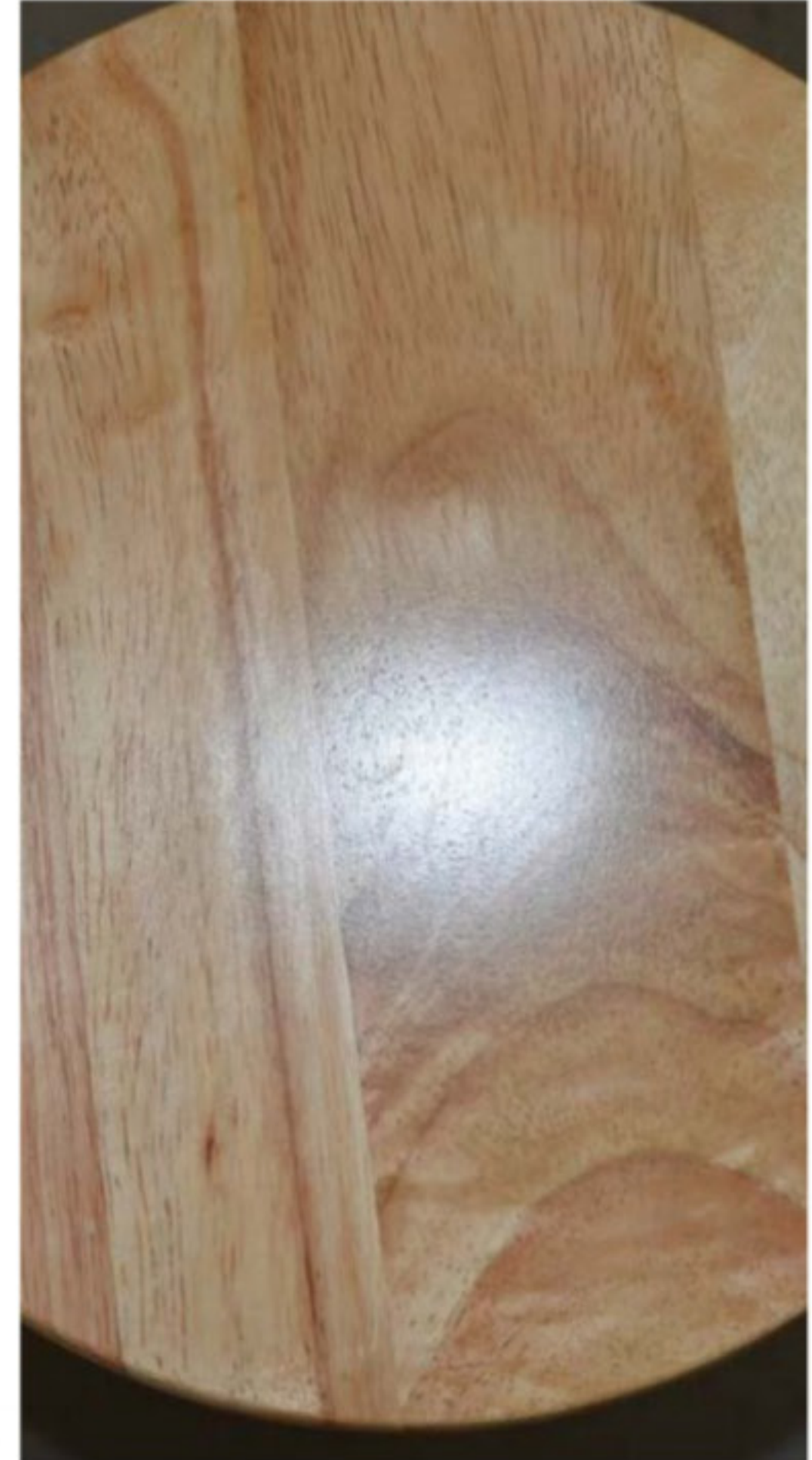
Interesting, isn't it? Wooden objects make up so much of our lives, yet are so rarely seen in our digital work. It's true that creating synthetic wooden textures is a difficult process and rarely looks convincing. But there are other ways to obtain that natural, rustic wood grain feel without trying to draw it yourself. This resources project explores a couple of methods for finding, digitising and using beautiful wood grain textures from the world around us.

Follow along and create your own textures, then supplement those with our free pack of wood grain textures on FileSilo. Free for you to use in your personal projects.



## SHOOTING YOUR OWN WOODEN TEXTURES

CAPTURE WOOD GRAIN TEXTURES TO USE IN DIGITAL PROJECTS



### 01 SELECT A GRAIN

Wooden objects are commonplace in our world. Find an object or surface that contains an interesting or useful wood grain. Try to locate an area with a flat, smooth surface.



### 03 WATCH THE LIGHTING

The lighting should be even across the surface. Either use a diffused off-camera light source, or adjust the camera settings to make use of the natural light in the room.

### 04 ISOLATE IN PHOTOSHOP

Open the photo in Photoshop. Crop the photo down tight to the target surface, then create a loose selection around it and copy it to a new layer. Hide or delete the original photo layer.

### 02 FLATTEN OUT

Frame the photo to shoot the texture as flat as possible. This often means finding a way to shoot straight down onto a surface, so be careful to keep your feet out of the shot!



### 05 CONTENT-AWARE FILL

Select the empty area around the surface and then go to Edit>Fill. Use the Content-Aware option to fill in the canvas with a fabricated wooden texture to match the original.



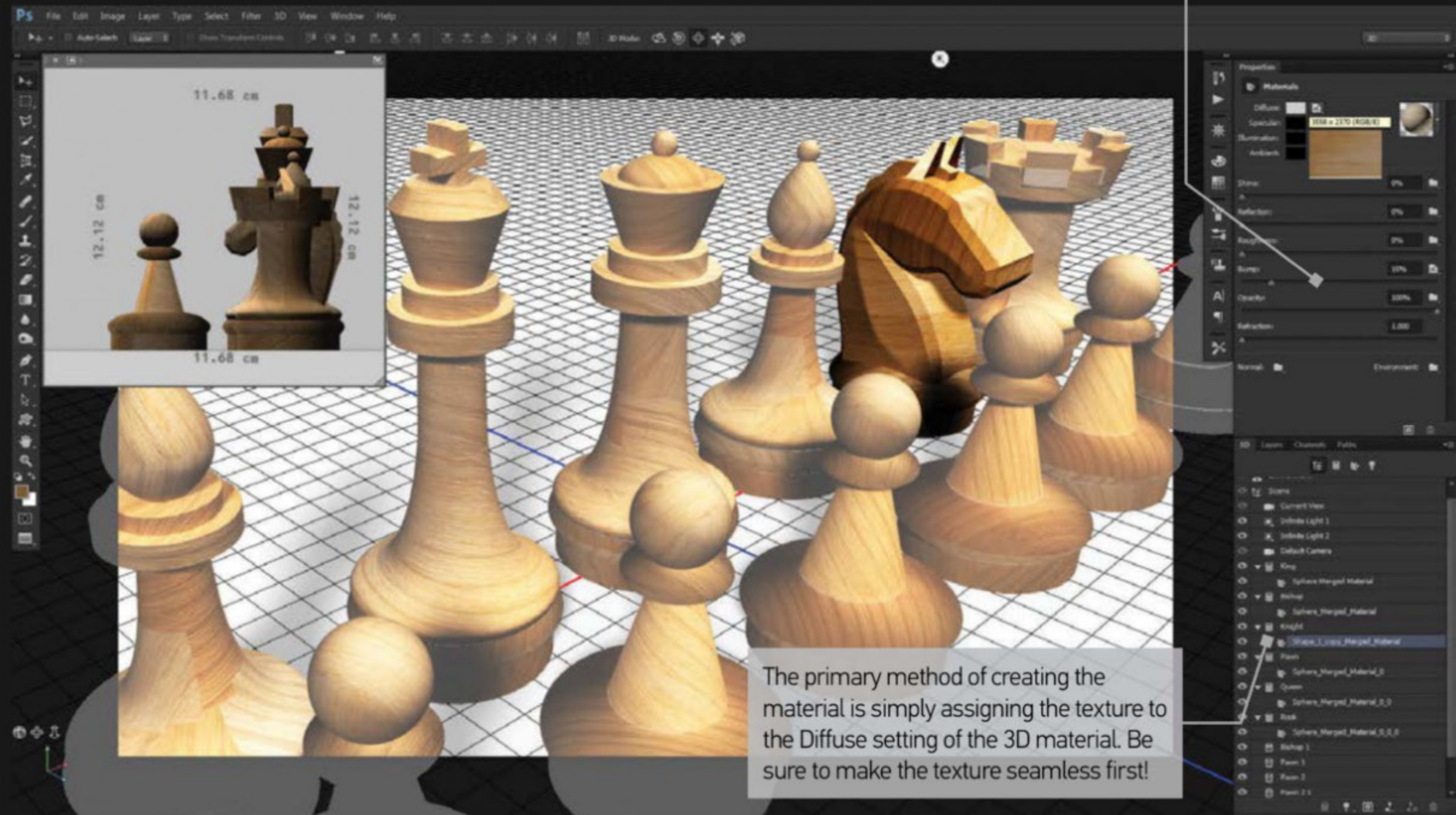
## ■ RESOURCE PROJECT | CAPTURE WOOD GRAIN TEXTURES

### ■ USE AS MATERIALS IN 3D RENDERS

USE YOUR CUSTOM WOOD TEXTURES TO CREATE BEAUTIFULLY RENDERED 3D SCENES

Wood grain textures are great for backgrounds, but can also be used to create believable wooden textures for 3D objects that are rendered right in Photoshop.

Assigning the same texture to the Bump setting will give the wood a rougher appearance that follows along with the grain. This prevents the surface from looking overly smooth.



The same texture can be used on several 3D objects. If there is a noticeable repetition of the texture on multiple objects, rotate the pieces slightly to provide some variation.

Adjusting the UV properties is another way of introducing visual variety when using the same texture in multiple places. Work with the scale and offset settings to reposition the texture.



## ■ USING A SCANNER TO CAPTURE TEXTURES

FOR SMALL WOOD SURFACES, SCANNING IS THE PREFERRED METHOD



**01 | SCAN IT!** Scanning ensures there is no perspective or uneven lighting to worry about as long as the wood is lying flat on the scanner glass. Scan in colour at a high resolution of 300dpi or better.



**02 | TRIM UP** In Photoshop, open the file and use the Crop tool to trim off the outside areas and the edges of the wood. Also flatten out any unwanted rotation from the scanned image.



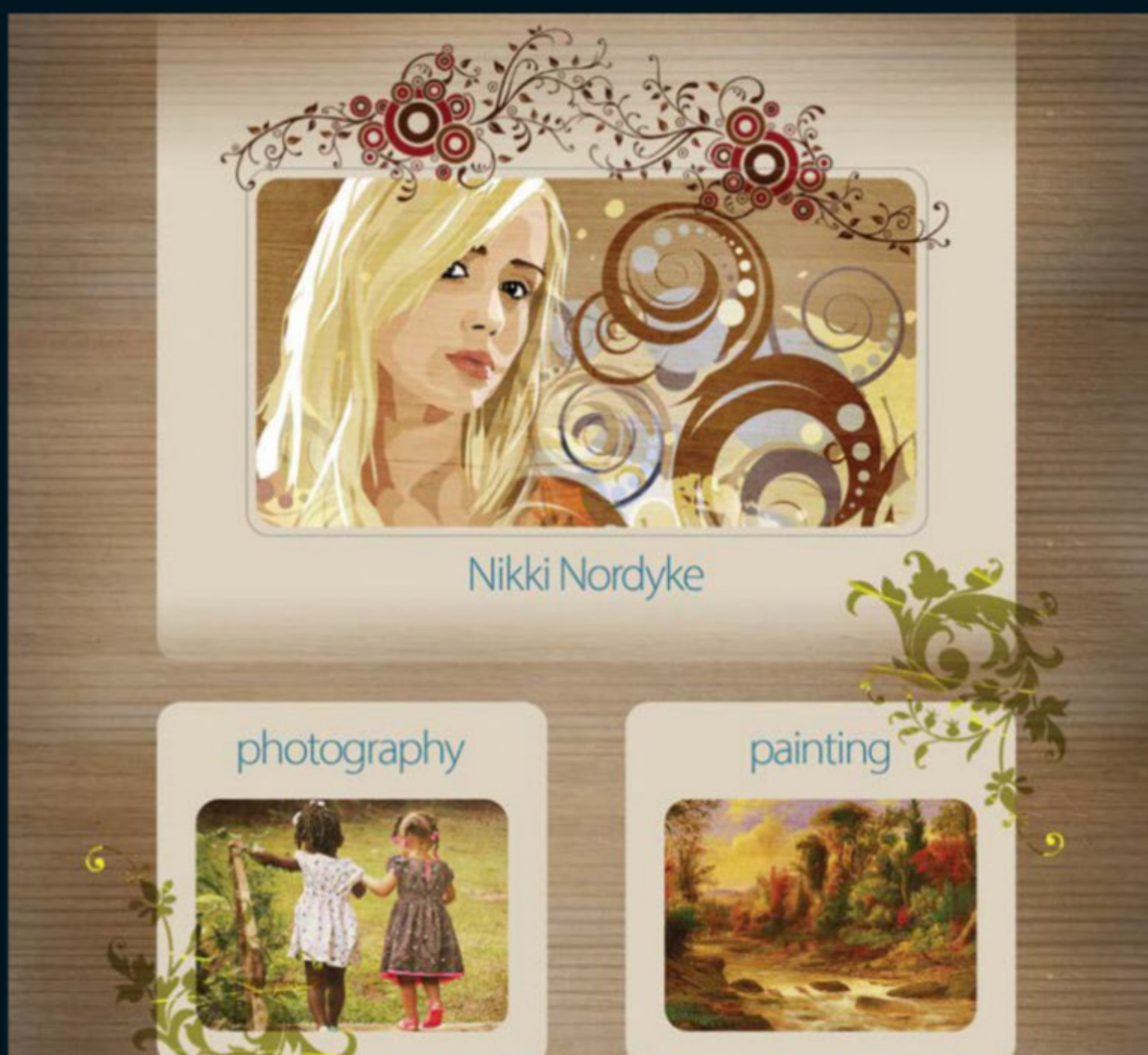
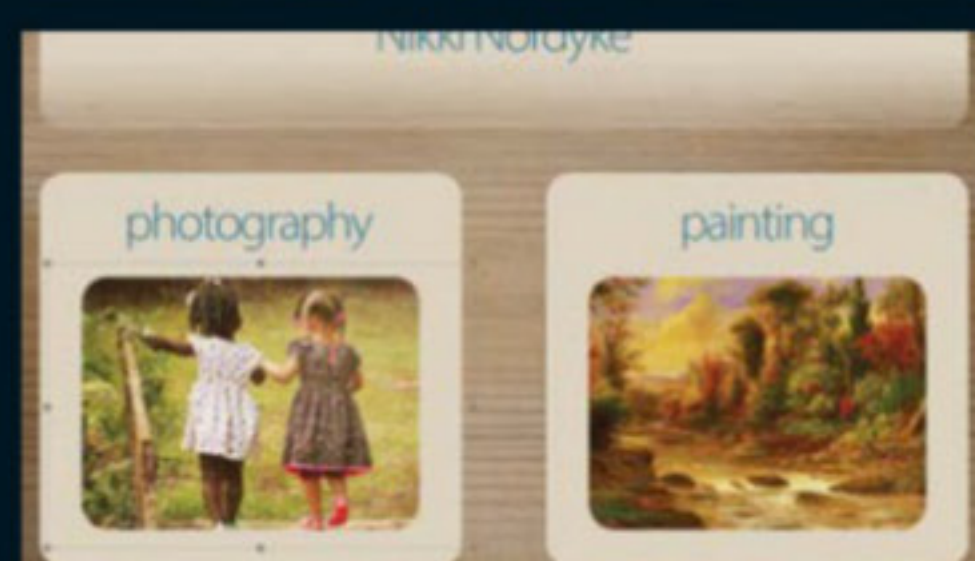
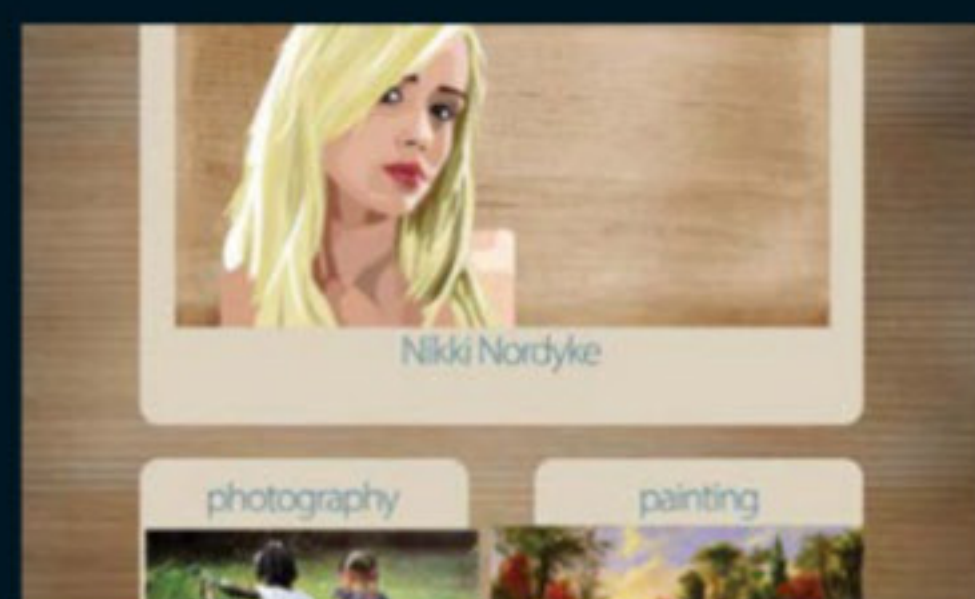
**03 | CLEAN UP** Use the Spot Healing Brush tool to remove any small snags or splinters in the wood surface. Larger damaged areas will require the Patch tool or Clone Stamp tool.

## ■ WOODEN TEXTURE BACKGROUNDS

USING YOUR TEXTURES FOR HANDSOME DIGITAL BACKGROUNDS

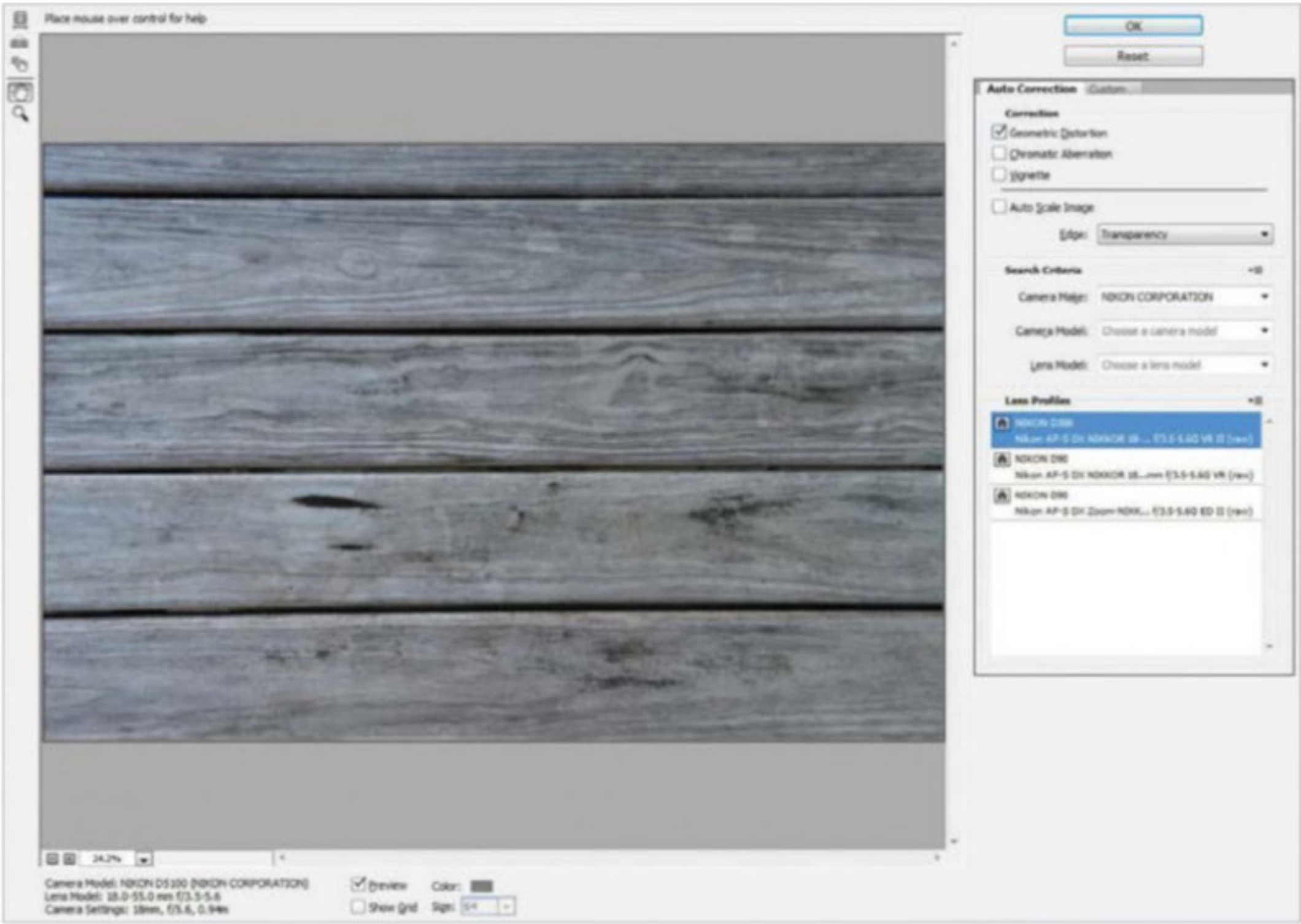
Using a natural, organic texture like wood grain can add warmth to your digital designs. Natural elements are instantly recognisable and bring a sense of trust and comfort to the cold realm of digital art. When using a natural wood background texture, make use of blending modes to allow as much of the texture to show through without disrupting the essence of the artwork. Allow the natural

feel to enhance the composition, not clash with it. So use a warm palette with earth tones and consider adorning the composition with other natural-appearing elements like floral arrangements, ivy and concentric swirls. Avoid hard, sharp edges; instead opt for shapes with rounded corners. In our composition here, a gradient mask fades the main content box to allow more of the wooden texture to show through. The wood background inside the rounded boxes is also slightly different to the background texture. This is a subtle detail that isn't immediately noticeable, but helps to set the content off from surrounding elements.

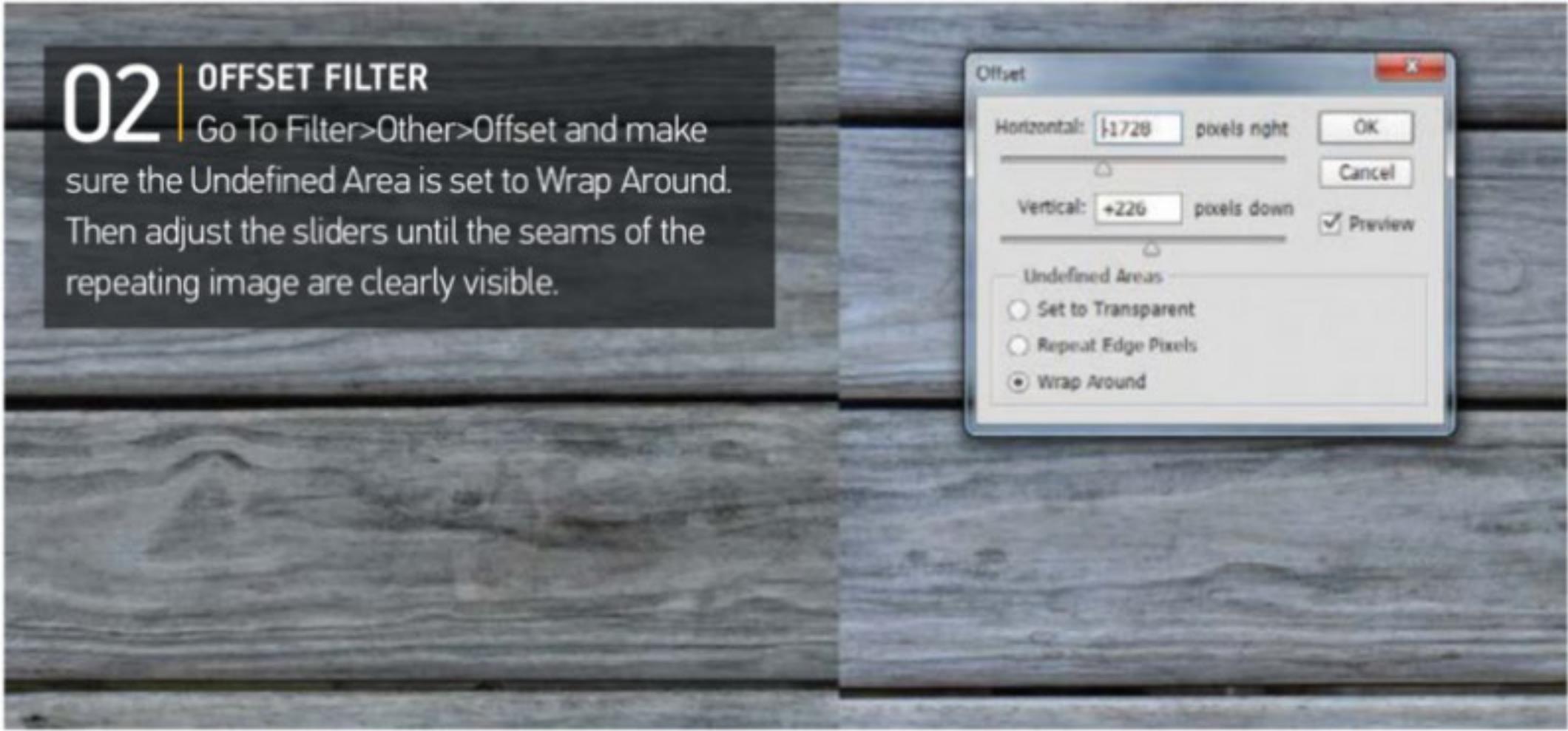




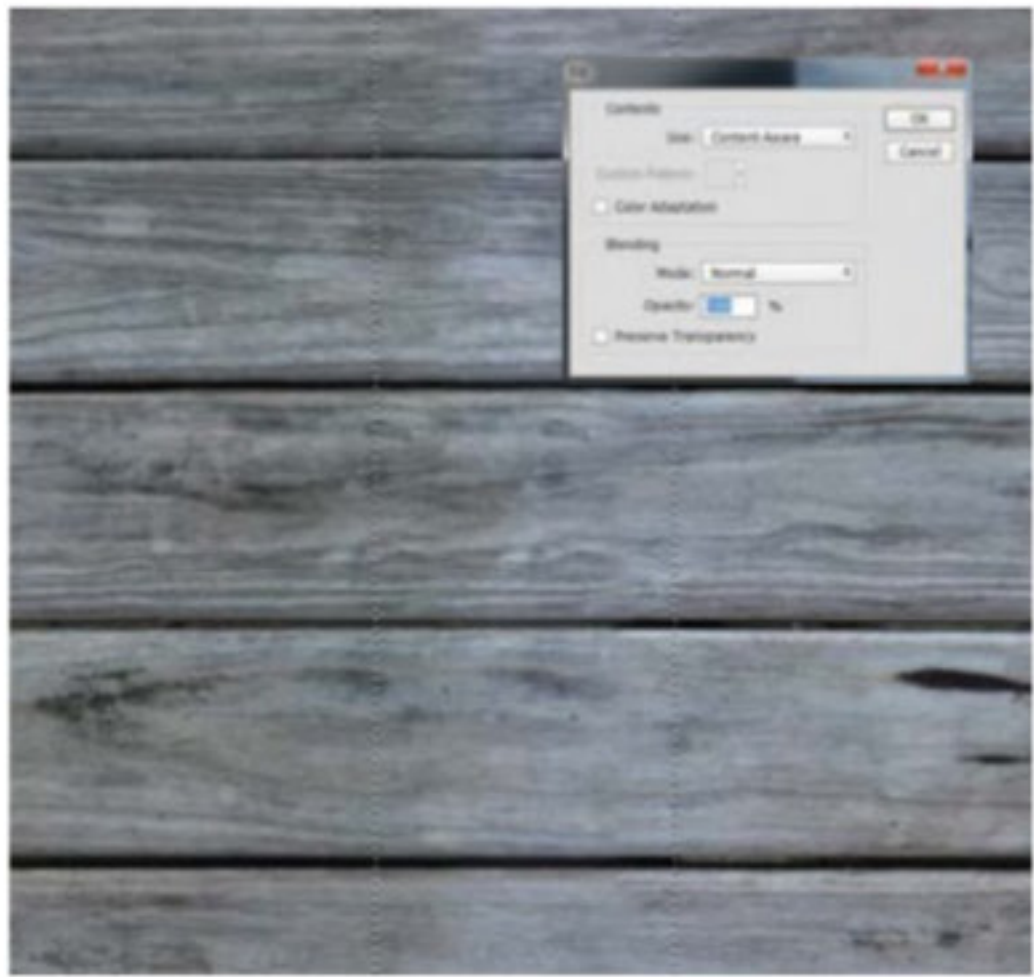
HOW TO CREATE SEAMLESS PATTERNS  
HOW TO CRAFT WOOD TEXTURES THAT CAN REPEAT WITHOUT VISIBLE SEAMS



**01 | REMOVE DISTORTION**  
Use the Lens Correction filter to correct any geometric distortion created by the curve of the camera lens. This will straighten out the lines that tend to curve away from the centre.



**02 | OFFSET FILTER**  
Go To Filter>Other>Offset and make sure the Undefined Area is set to Wrap Around. Then adjust the sliders until the seams of the repeating image are clearly visible.



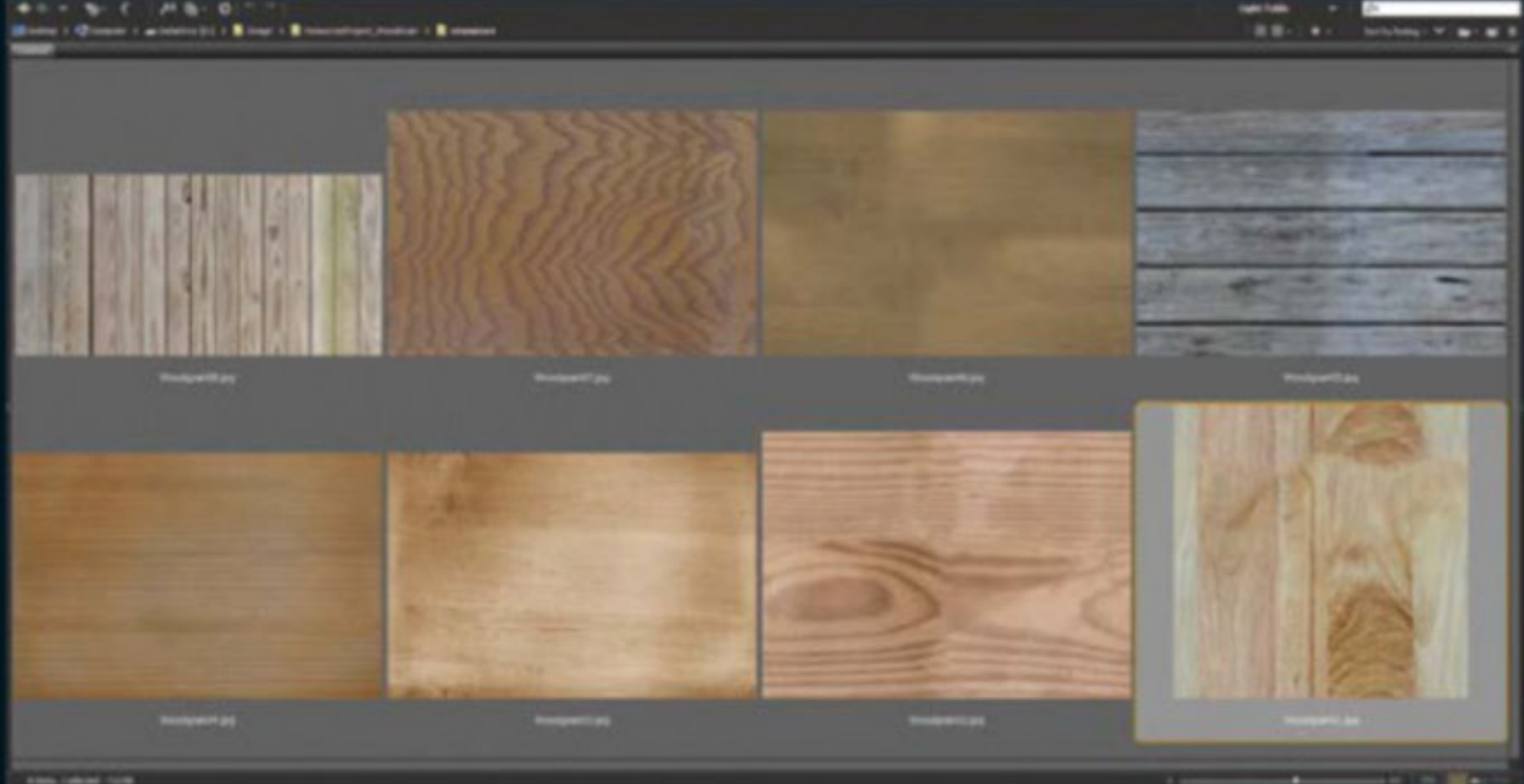
**03 | REMOVE SEAMS**  
Select the seam along with a healthy area around it. Use the Content-Aware Fill to help blend the edges together. Touch up any problem areas with the Healing Brush and Clone Stamp tool.





**WOOD GRAIN TEXTURES**  
HIGH-RESOLUTION, SEAMLESS WOOD GRAIN TEXTURES

We've included eight different, high-resolution, perfectly seamless wood grain textures that are free for you to use in your personal projects. Use them to add a natural warmth and appeal to your backgrounds!





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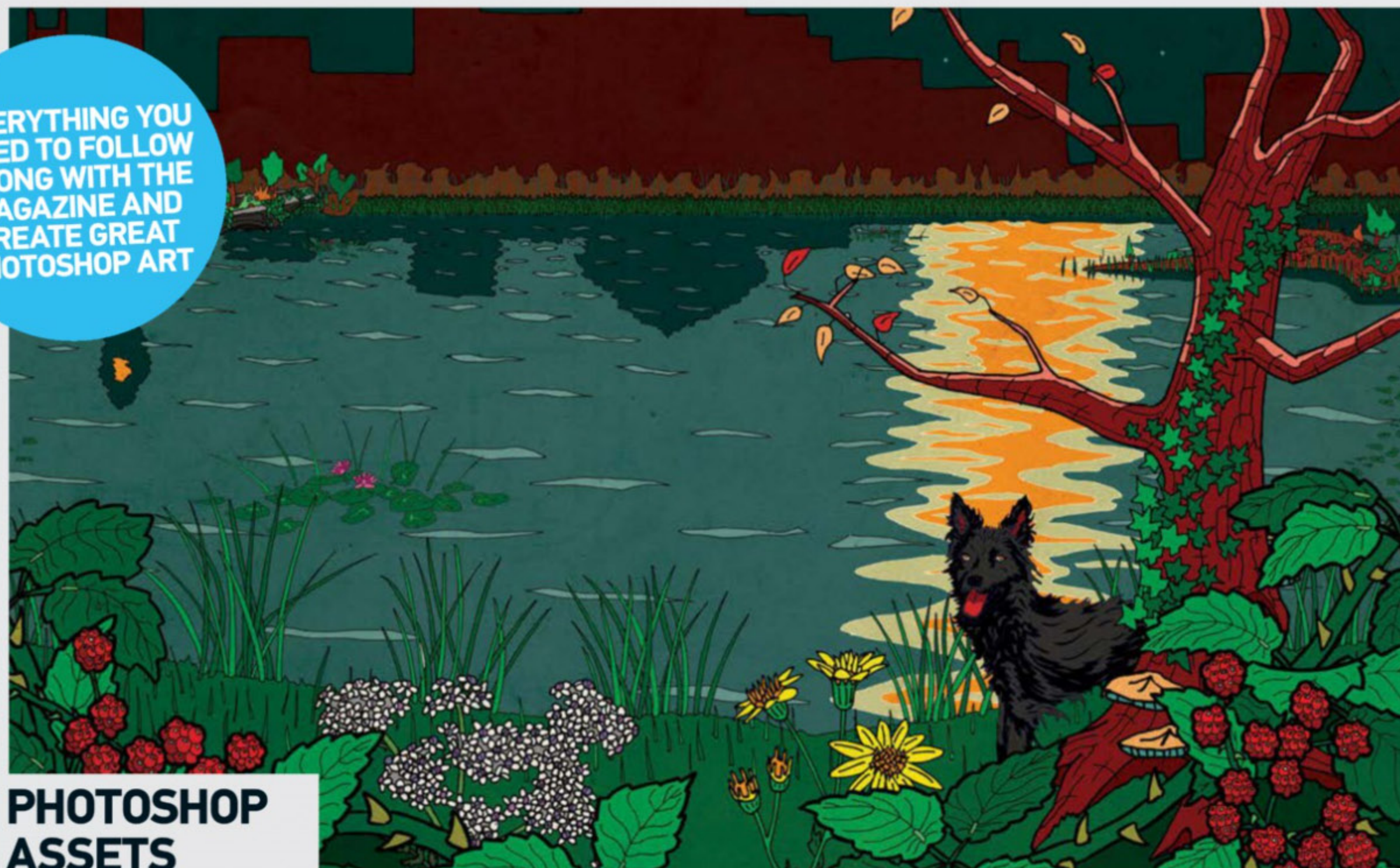
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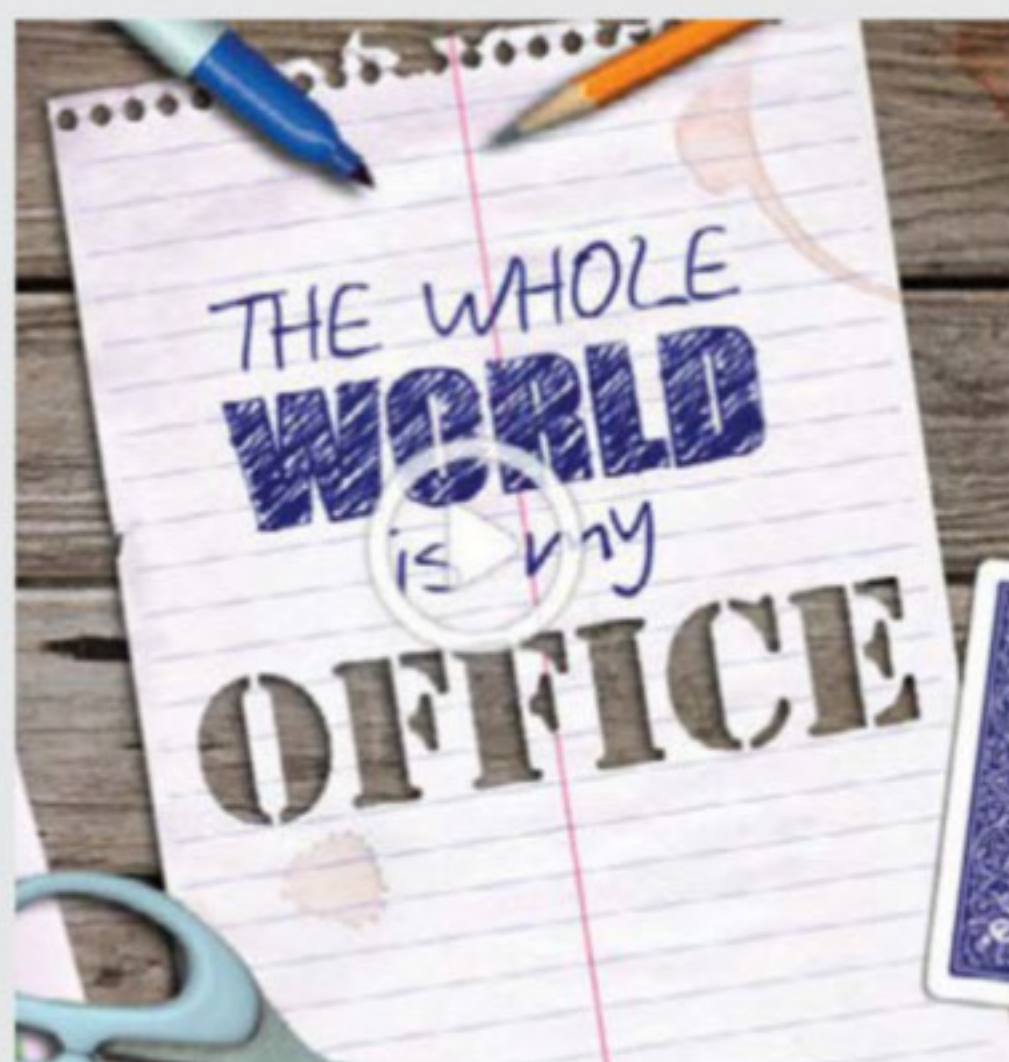
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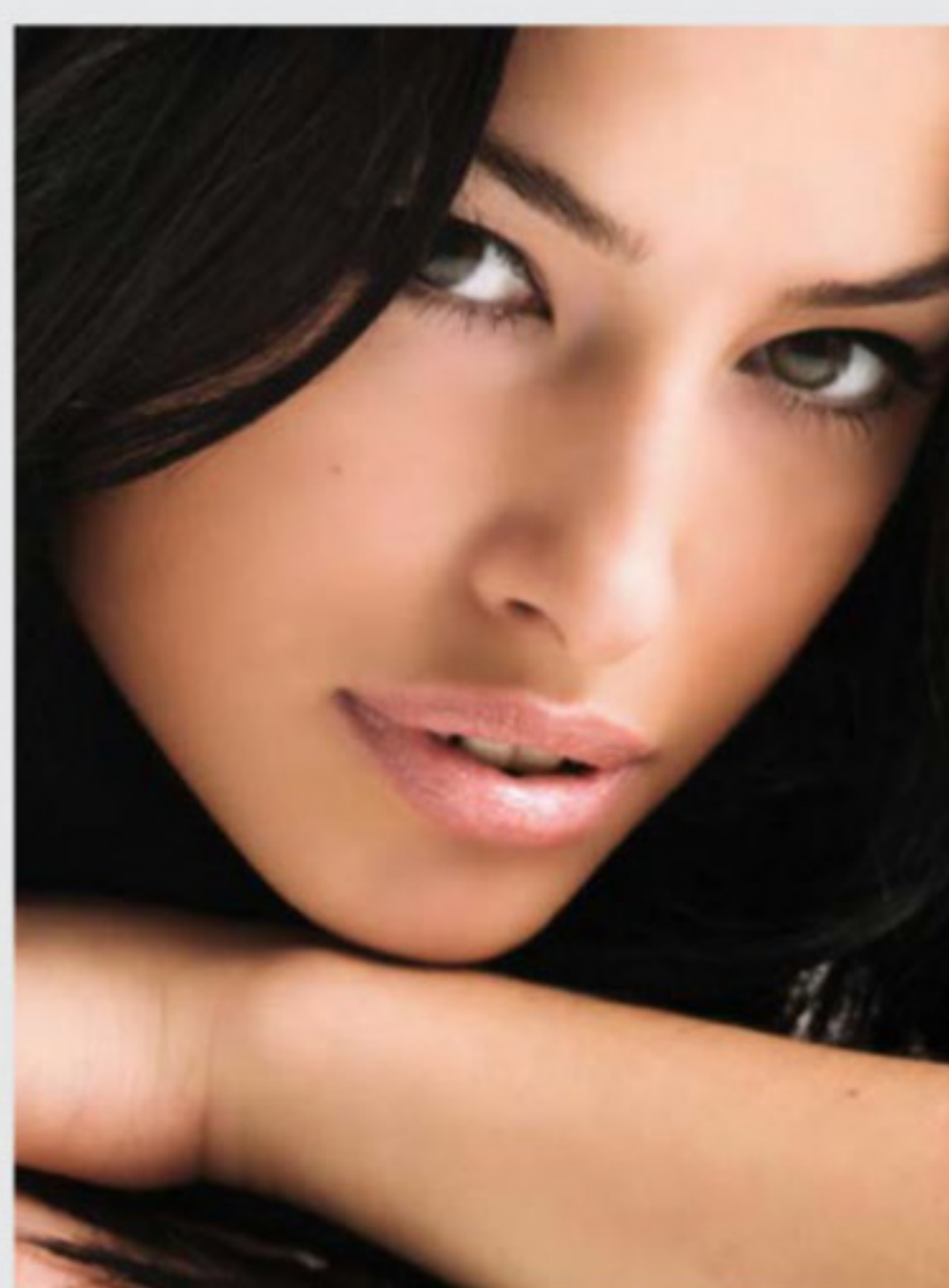
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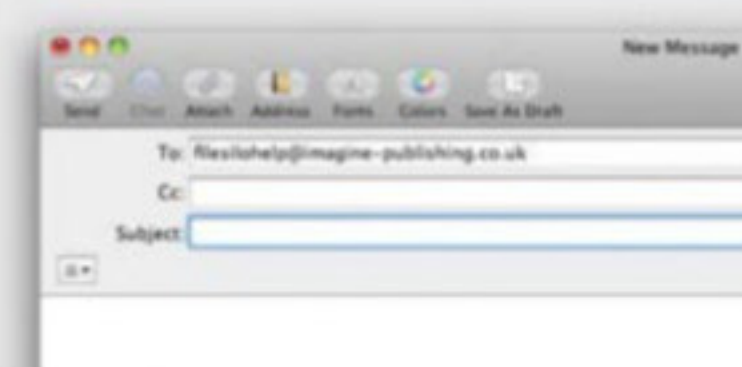


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